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LONGMANS' ENGLISH CLASSICS

EDITED BY

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SIR WALTER SCOTT

THE LADY OF THE LAKE



MAP TO ILLUSTRATE THE LADY OF THE LAKE

Longmans, Green & Co., N.Y.

Longmans' English Classics

SIR WALTER SCOTT'S

THE LADY OF THE LAKE

EDITED

WITH NOTES AND AN INTRODUCTION

BY

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LONGMANS, GREEN AND CO.
NEW YORK CHICAGO BOSTON TORONTO

SCOTT
THE LADY OF THE LAKE
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First Edition December 1902
Reprinted October 1905, December 1907, August 1910
September 1911, June 1913, May 1915, February 1916
March 1917, May 1918, May 1919, March 1921
December 1921, December 1922, May 1925
February 1928, September 1928
August 1929, February 1940

PREFACE

AN examination of the existing editions of "The Lady of the Lake" reveals the fact that, with few exceptions, they are designed to facilitate the elaborate study of the poem. Now it may perhaps be proper, under certain circumstances, to make so simple a poem as this the subject of detailed study, but such was plainly not the intention of the English Conference in placing it among the list of books prescribed for reading. A youth reads Scott's poems with most pleasure and profit when he takes them up spontaneously, and plunges into them without glossary or commentary, aiding himself by his own wits. Nowadays, unfortunately, it is scarcely safe to assume that a lad will come to Scott of his own accord. It has been deemed best by many, therefore, to place in the first year of the preparatory school curriculum the reading of "The Lady of the Lake," in the hope that boys and girls will enjoy the poem and will thus be introduced by it not only to others of Scott's works, but to English narrative poetry in general. The aim of the present edition is merely to supply such help as is absolutely indispensable to a class beginning the reading of the poem under such circumstances.

The text is that of Lockhart's standard edition, with some misprints corrected and such changes in capitalization and punctuation made as would secure uniformity. The introduction tries to give the pupil a glimpse of the essential elements in Scott's character; the notes explain

a few hard words and difficult allusions, and endeavor to centre the pupil's attention on the critical points in the development of the plot. The appendix contains Scott's introduction to the edition of 1830, and a part of his charming narrative, in "Tales of a Grandfather," of the life and times of James V. These the pupils may be interested in after he has read the poem itself. Further aids do not seem to be necessary. The teacher never has a better opportunity for the exercise of his art without extraneous aid than in "The Lady of the Lake."

G R. C.

CONTENTS

	PAGE
INTRODUCTION	ix
SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHERS	xx
CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE	xxi
THE LADY OF THE LAKE	1
NOTES	159
APPENDIX :	
I. Scott's Introduction to the Edition of 1830	167
II. The Reign of James V., from "Tales of a Grand- father"	172

INTRODUCTION

THE pleasure of reading Scott's verse is greatly enhanced by some knowledge of his life. This may be best obtained through the famous biography by his son-in-law, Lockhart, one of the best known works of its kind in English literature, to which the reader is advised to resort at his earliest opportunity. If this is inaccessible, any of the several short biographies of a more recent date will serve the purpose sufficiently well, or even the articles in the "Encyclopædia Britannica" and the "National Dictionary of Biography." Scott's personality was so vivid, the charm and nobility of his character so great, that they can scarcely be disguised in the most bungling account. It is only proper, however, that a brief summary of his life should be placed here, in close juxtaposition to the text of his most famous poem, for the convenience of the reader, and as a token that an appreciation of the man himself is indispensable to a full appreciation of his verse.

Walter Scott was born in Edinburgh in 1771. He could trace his ancestry back on both sides to doughty old warriors of the border-land, and on his father's side his family had for generation after generation lived and died in that district. His father, however, had become an Edinburgh lawyer. In that beautiful city, full of historic associations and of picturesque charm, Scott spent his boyhood and received his education, but fortunately for his later career his delicate health as an infant led his parents to send him to live with his country relatives, and a childhood spent largely in the open air, in simple and healthful pleasures, broadened his mind and character, and bred in him certain dominant traits, such as his passion for outdoor life and his love for animals. He grew up an active lad, fond of sport, and little hampered in it by a chronic lameness, the result of an illness of his infancy.

In 1783 he entered the College of Edinburgh, where he received an excellent education, and in 1786 he began the study of law in his father's office. After five years of apprenticeship he attended lectures on law in the University of Edinburgh, and in 1792 was admitted to the bar. His interest in his profession was not great. In 1797 he married, and in 1799 he obtained an appointment to the sheriffship of Selkirkshire, a post which had attached to it only light duties and which brought an income of £300 a year. This amount was soon swelled by inheritances to the comfortable sum of £1,000, exclusive of such fees as might come to him by practice. In 1806 he became also clerk of the Edinburgh Court of Sessions. At middle age, therefore, he was a lawyer without much practice, but the holder of two minor offices of some importance. He was a gentleman by birth, education, and character, and had sufficient means to live in comfort and to indulge his special tastes.

These special tastes made Scott a famous man of letters. From childhood up he had been distinguished by an extraordinarily tenacious memory and by great interest in romantic literature. Whatever he read with care became at once a constant part of his mental store, and he was deeply affected by whatever parts of the somewhat dull writings of the day could touch the emotions. An accomplished relative, Mrs. Cockburn, wrote thus of him at the age of six:

"I last night supped in Mr. Walter Scott's. He has the most extraordinary genius of a boy I ever saw. He was reading a poem to his mother when I went in. I made him read on; it was a description of a shipwreck. His passion rose with the storm. He lifted his eyes and hands. 'There's the mast gone!' says he. 'Crash it goes! They will all perish!' After his agitation he turns to me. 'That is too melancholy,' says he; 'I had better read you something more amusing. I preferred a little chat, and asked his opinion of Milton and other books he was reading, which he gave me wonderfully. One of his observations was: 'How strange it is that Adam, just new come into the world, should know everything; that must be the poet's fancy,' says he. But when he was told he was created perfect by God, he instantly yielded. When taken to bed last night, he told his aunt he liked that lady.

‘What lady?’ says she. ‘Why, Mrs. Cockburn; for I think she is a virtuoso like myself.’ ‘Dear Walter,’ says Aunt Jenny, ‘what is a virtuoso?’ ‘Don’t ye know? Why, it’s one that wishes and will know everything.’”*

As a schoolboy he was deep in tales of chivalry, the desire for which stimulated his study of French and drove him to learn Italian, and this is the way, at sixteen or thereabouts, he spent his afternoons, as an old friend, John Irving, relates:

“Every Saturday, and more frequently during the vacations, we used to retire, with three or four books . . . to Salisbury Crags, Arthur’s Seat, or Blackford Hill, and read them together. He read faster than I, and had, on this account, to wait a little at finishing every two pages, before turning the leaf. The books we most delighted in were romances of knight-errantry; the ‘Castle of Otranto,’ Spenser, Ariosto, and Boiardo, were great favourites. We used to climb up the rocks in search of places where we might sit sheltered from the wind; and the more inaccessible they were, the better we liked them. He was very expert at climbing. Sometimes we got into places where we found it difficult to move either up or down, and I recollect it being proposed, on several occasions, that I should go for a ladder to see and extricate him; but I never had any need really to do so, for he always managed somehow either to get down or ascend to the top. The number of books we thus devoured was very great. I forgot a great part of what I read, but my friend, notwithstanding he read with such rapidity, remained, to my surprise, master of it all, and could even weeks or months afterward repeat a whole page in which anything had particularly struck him at the moment. After we had continued this practice of reading for two years or more together, he proposed that we should recite to each other alternately such adventures of knight-errants as we could ourselves contrive; and we continued to do so a long while. He found no difficulty in it, and used to recite for half an hour or more at a time, while I seldom continued half that space. The stories we told were, as Sir Walter has said, interminable—for we were unwilling to have any of our favourite knights killed.”†

Scott’s passion for romance was not confined to literature. Until about this time few Europeans had been interested in local history, and most people looked with a

* Quoted in W. H. Hudson’s *Sir Walter Scott*, p. 13.

† J. G. Lockhart, *Memoirs of the Life of Scott*.

touch of scorn on the art, the manners, and the customs of the Middle Ages. But a wave of enthusiasm for all these things was beginning to sweep over Europe; Scott shared this feeling of admiration for antiquity, and became one of the most powerful influences in bringing about this marked change in popular sentiment. From boyhood he had taken a deep interest in old Scottish ballads, few of which had then been printed, but which were still kept alive in the memory of country folk. These he gathered, so far as he could, with great pains, making special journeys for the purpose of securing a new ballad or a part of one. He collected old Scottish coins and armor, familiarized himself with heraldry and with the genealogy of important families, visited ruined castles and scenes of border foray, made excursions into the then little known Highlands, and in short sought out with care all information that threw light on the older phases of life in his native land. He was often laughed at for his pains, but he became the best antiquary in Scotland, as was shown by his "*Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border*" (1802), a collection of old ballads, with a considerable body of explanatory notes, indicative of immense industry and great learning.

The "*Minstrelsy*" led directly to original production. The Countess of Dalkeith urged him to write a ballad on the eerie border tradition of the Goblin page, and he assented. But he had undertaken to edit, as a supplement to the "*Minstrelsy*," an old metrical romance, "*Sir Tristrem*"; and it occurred to him to take this as a model, and to write in a more strictly narrative form of the pranks of Gilpin Horner at Branksome Hall, as an old minstrel might have sung them; and thus was produced the first great poetical romance of modern times—the "*Lay of the Last Minstrel*" (1805). It met with such approval, this new kind of composition, dealing with the brave old days of Scottish knights and border warfare, that he must perforce continue. Other noble poems followed in quick succession, of which the greatest favorites, then and now, are "*Marmion*" (1808) and "*The Lady of the Lake*" (1810); and Scott speedily found himself the best read and the most highly praised poet in Great Britain.

Nor was this all. His strong inventive faculty, once roused, led him into the field of prose narrative. His first novel, "Waverley" (1814), was received with a clamorous delight that was only partly appeased by the score and more of other historical novels that flowed from his pen with marvellous rapidity. He became not only the most widely read novelist in England, but a favorite author of the whole civilized world. The way once pointed out, others could follow it with ease, and Cooper in the United States, Dumas in France, and less well-known writers in other countries, took him as a model in stirring historical tales of their native lands. Even the grave historians themselves fell under his spell, and Macaulay and Parkman—to mention but two—strove to attain, by the marshalling of proved facts, an effect of the same kind as that which he had produced by mingled fact and fancy.

Scott's fondness for life in the country amounted to a passion. On his marriage he took a cottage at Lasswade, on the Esk, near Edinburgh. In a few years, as his fortunes improved, he leased a house called Ashestiel, on the southern bank of the Tweed, about seven miles from Selkirk. In 1812, when his writings were beginning to bring him a large revenue, he bought a farm of about one hundred acres, in the same district, near Melrose Abbey, which he christened Abbotsford. His whole temper of mind was aristocratic, and his ambition was to be the owner of a noble estate which might descend to his children's children, forever associated with his name; especially was this the case after his elevation to a baronetcy in 1820. On Abbotsford, therefore, he lavished large sums gained by his pen, in extending and improving his property and in building, until the total amount spent was not less than three hundred and eighty thousand dollars.

To this pet extravagance was added the fatal error of an investment unwisely made and carelessly managed. An old schoolmate, James Ballantyne, who had a genius for typography, established himself as a printer and publisher in Edinburgh, and Scott not only put his own works into his hands but joined him as a partner. This latter relation, however, was kept secret, for Scott fool-

ishly held the old feeling that a "gentleman" could not engage in trade. Scott's books alone would have made a printer and a publisher successful, but Ballantyne, though an admirable printer, was a poor man of business, and in 1813 the firm was saved from bankruptcy only through the aid of Constable, an Edinburgh publisher of greater reputation and stability. Thenceforward Ballantyne—with Scott as a silent partner—was to print Scott's books and Constable was to publish them. And then each party to the agreement began giving notes to the other, and drafts and counterdrafts came thick and fast, until no one knew what the actual status of either business was. The circulation of Scott's novels was enormous, and author, printer, and publisher drew freely from the apparent profits without close scrutiny of the facts. The crash came in 1825. Constable's London agents had been speculating, and their discomfiture disabled Constable and hence Ballantyne and Scott; and Scott found himself suddenly faced with the alternative of declaring himself bankrupt or meeting Ballantyne's obligations and his own—a total sum of six hundred and fifty thousand dollars.

Scott chose the nobler part, and heroically set to work, at the age of fifty-four, to discharge this enormous debt by his pen. "Time and I," he declared, "against any two." In the two following years he paid his creditors two hundred thousand dollars. But his pride had received too great a blow and his iron strength had been too severely tested. His powers slowly failed, and he died of apoplexy in 1832, but not until he had discharged so large a part of his burden that the remainder was covered by his life insurance. Few men have led lives more free from reproach; few men of letters have been more widely and justly honored, or, in life and in death, more justly admired and loved.

We shall enjoy Scott's writings most, and appreciate them most wisely, if we picture him to ourselves at Abbotsford, in the height of his fame and his energy, leading the life he preferred—that of the country gentleman of rank, on his own beautiful estate. His house was full of guests and he himself immersed in business and pleasure,

the man of affairs as well as the most charming of hosts Lockhart has best drawn the picture :

“About the middle of August, my wife and I went to Abbotsford ; and we remained there for several weeks, during which I became familiarized to Sir Walter Scott's mode of existence in the country. The humblest person who stayed merely for a short visit must have departed with the impression that what he witnessed was an occasional variety ; that Scott's courtesy prompted him to break in upon his habits when he had a stranger to amuse ; but that it was physically impossible that the man who was writing the Waverley romances at the rate of nearly twelve volumes in the year, could continue, week after week, and month after month, to devote all but a hardly perceptible fraction of his mornings to out-of-door occupations, and the whole of his evenings to the entertainment of a constantly varying circle of guests. The hospitality of his afternoons must alone have been enough to exhaust the energies of almost any man. . . . He lived in a constant interchange of easy visits with the gentlemen's families of Teviotdale and the Forest ; so that, mixed up with his superfine admirers of the Mayfair breed, his staring worshippers from foreign parts, and his quick-witted coevals of the Parliament House, there was found generally some hearty homespun laird, with his dame, and the young laird—a bashful bumpkin, perhaps, whose ideas did not soar beyond his gun and pointer—or perhaps a little pseudo-dandy, for whom the Kelso race-course and the Jedburgh ball were Life and the World. To complete the *olla podrida*, we must remember that no old acquaintance, or family connections, however remote their actual station or style of manners from his own, were forgotten or lost sight of. He had some, even near relations, who, except when they visited him, rarely if ever found admittance to what the haughty dialect of the upper world is pleased to designate exclusively as *society*. These were welcome guests, let who might be under that roof ; and it was the same with many a worthy citizen of Edinburgh, habitually moving in an obscure circle, who had been in the same class with Scott at the High School, or his fellow-apprentice when he was proud of earning threepence a page by the use of his pen. To dwell on nothing else, it was surely a beautiful perfection of real universal humanity and politeness, that could enable this great and good man to blend guests so multifarious in one group, and contrive to make them all equally happy with him, with themselves, and with each other.

“I remember saying to William Allan one morning as the whole party mustered before the porch after breakfast—‘A faithful sketch of what you at this moment see, would be

more interesting a hundred years hence than the grandest so-called historical picture that you will ever exhibit at Somerset House;’ and my friend agreed with me so cordially that I often wondered afterwards he had not attempted to realize the suggestion. The subject ought, however, to have been treated conjointly by him (or Wilkie) and Edwin Landseer. It was a clear, bright September morning, with a sharpness in the air that doubled the animating influence of the sunshine, and all was in readiness for a grand coursing match on Newark Hill. The only guest who had chalked out other sport for himself was the stanchest of anglers, Mr. Rose; but he, too, was there on his *shelly*, armed with his salmon-rod and landing-net, and attended by his humourous squire, Hives, and Charlie Purdie, a brother of Tom, in those days the most celebrated fisherman of the district. This little group of Waltonians, bound for Lord Somerville’s preserve, remained lounging about to witness the start of the main cavalcade. Sir Walter, mounted on Sibyl, was marshalling the order of procession with a huge hunting-whip; and, among a dozen frolicsome youths and maidens, who seemed disposed to laugh at all discipline, appeared, each on horseback, each as eager as the youngest sportsman in the troop, Sir Humphrey Davy, Dr. Wollaston, and the patriarch of Scottish belles-lettres, Henry Mackenzie. The Man of Feeling, however, was persuaded with some difficulty to resign his steed for the present to his faithful negro follower, and to join Lady Scott in the sociable, until we should reach the ground of our *battue*. Laidlaw, on a long-tailed, wiry Highlander, yeleft *Hoddin Grey*, which carried him nimbly and stoutly, although his feet almost touched the ground as he sat, was the adjutant. But the most picturesque figure was the illustrious inventor of the safety-lamp. He had come for his favourite sport of angling, and had been practising it successfully with Rose, his travelling companion, for two or three days preceding this, but he had not prepared for coursing fields, or had left Charlie Purdie’s troop for Sir Walter’s on a sudden thought; and his fisherman’s costume—a brown hat with flexible brims, surrounded with line upon line, and innumerable fly-hooks, jack-boots worthy of a Dutch smuggler, and a fustian surtout dabbled with the blood of salmon—made a fine contrast with the smart jackets, white-cord breeches, and well-polished jockey-boots of the less distinguished cavaliers about him. Dr. Wollaston was in black, and with his noble serene dignity of countenance might have passed for a sporting archbishop. Mr. Mackenzie, at this time in the 76th year of his age, with a white hat turned up, with green spectacles, green jacket, and long brown leathern gaiters, buttoned upon his nether anatomy, wore a dog-

whistle round his neck, and had all over the air of as resolute a devotee as the gay captain of Huntley Burn. Tom Purdie and his subalterns had preceded us by a few hours, with all the greyhounds that could be collected at Abbotsford, Darnick, and Melrose; but the giant Maida had remained as his master's orderly, and now gambolled about Sibyl Grey, barking for mere joy like a spaniel puppy.

"The order of the march had all been settled, and the sociable was just getting under way, when *the Lady Anne* broke from the line, screaming with laughter, and exclaimed, 'Papa, papa, I knew you would never think of going without your pet.' Scott looked round, and I rather think there was a blush as well as a smile upon his face, when he perceived a little black pig frisking about his pony, and evidently a self-elected addition to the party of the day. He tried to look stern, and cracked his whip at the creature, but was in a moment obliged to join in the general cheers. Poor piggy soon found a strap round its neck, and was dragged into the background: Scott, watching the retreat, repeated with mock pathos the first verse of an old pastoral song—

'What will I do gin my hoggie * die ?
My joy, my pride, my hoggie !
My only beast, I had nae mae,
And wow ! but I was vogie !'

the cheers were redoubled, and the squadron moved on."

In the midst of a life that apparently gave no opportunities for meditation and for composition, Scott's iron will and immense energy enabled him to accomplish the impossible.

"He now adopted the habits in which, with slender variation, he ever after persevered when in the country. He rose by five o'clock, lit his own fire when the season required one, and shaved and dressed with great deliberation—for he was a very martinet as to all but the mere coxcombries of the toilet, not abhorring effeminate dandyism itself so cordially as the slightest approach to personal slovenliness, or even those 'bed-gown and slipper tricks,' as he called them, in which literary men are so apt to indulge. Clad in his shooting-jacket, or whatever dress he meant to use till dinner time, he was seated at his desk by six o'clock, all his papers arranged before him in the most accurate order, and his books of reference marshalled around him on the floor, while at least one

* Hog signifies in the Scotch dialect a young sheep that has never been shorn.

favourite dog lay watching his eye, just beyond the line of circumvallation. Thus by the time the family assembled for breakfast between nine and ten, he had done enough (in his own language) '*to break the neck of the day's work.*' After breakfast a couple of hours more were given to his solitary tasks, and by noon he was, as he used to say, '*his own man.*' When the weather was bad, he would labour incessantly all the morning; but the general rule was to be out and on horseback by one o'clock at the latest; while, if any more distant excursion had been proposed over night, he was ready to start on it by ten; his occasional rainy days of unintermitted study forming, as he said, a fund in his favour, out of which he was entitled to draw for accommodation whenever '*the sun shone with special brightness.*'"

The secret of Scott's success in letters was twofold. First, he wrote from a full mind. His attention had been from childhood centred on national history and antiquities, and long years spent in patient acquisition of material freed him from the necessity of further research. His habit of living over in his imagination the life of the olden days, reconstructing it with the scholarship and wide information of the professed antiquary, relieved him of pedantry. He could write of bygone ages as freely as others could of contemporary life. Second, he had in the highest degree the faculty of invention. He was a born story-teller, possessed of that rare and mysterious power that permits the genius to create unreal characters of the fancy that yet have an actuality and individuality of their own, and then to combine them all, each influencing the other and each acting in accordance with the law of his own nature, in a vivid drama of human life.

It would not be proper here to enter on a criticism of Scott's verse. Its method is too simple, too direct, to require detailed analysis. The business of the boy is to read Scott—to read him and to enjoy him, as his father and his grandfather have done before him. Criticism will not aid him in this; and when he has once read Scott with pleasure, he will find criticism superfluous until, in later years, he approaches the subject from a different point of view, and is impelled by intellectual curiosity to analyze and compare his impressions. I need merely say that "*The Lady of the Lake*" is the work of a man who deeply loved

his native land and who was passionately fond of romance. It is a stirring tale of patriotic romance, and it will be most enjoyed when it is read as such. Happy is the boy or girl who is just opening its magic pages, full of youthful enthusiasm and with a simple delight in the adventurous romance of olden days!

SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHERS

MUCH might be said about the best way of *studying* one of Scott's poems, but that is not the matter in hand. There is only one good way for a class to *read* one of Scott's poems, and that is to read with enthusiastic interest and with the mind fixed on the story. The editor, therefore, will merely venture to offer the following suggestions:

1. It is wise to proceed as rapidly with the reading as is consistent with a good general understanding of the text. To go over the poem at first with minute accuracy of detail will take away much or all of the pupil's interest. The first two or three lessons must necessarily cover only a little ground, for the vocabulary will be unfamiliar. But this difficulty should not be made too much of. It would be absurd to read Scott's poetry dictionary in hand. Tell the class what some of the strange words mean, if necessary, and help them to guess the rest from the context. Unaided and unstimulated, a pupil will often grope in his notes for the meaning of expressions which, once he has caught the knack, he can interpret for himself.

2. It is well to have as much reading aloud as possible on the part both of teacher and pupils, in order that the class may get the swing of the verse and feel its stimulus.

3. Keep the story in mind throughout. Help the class to appreciate each situation, each link in the plot.

4. After the poem has thus been read rapidly, with only three to five lessons on each canto, it is proper to review it with more care, making sure that the class understands accurately the meaning of each stanza.

5. The reading of the poem will have been only partly successful if pupils are not led to go on with the reading of others of Scott's poetical romances, particularly "Marmion" and "The Lay of the Last Minstrel." After the poems, the novels will be but a natural sequence.

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE.

SCOTT'S LIFE.	WORKS.	LITERATURE.	BIOGRAPHY AND HISTORY.
1771. Aug. 15. Born.			1771. Gray and Smollett died.
1792. Called to the Bar. 1797. Marriage. 1799. Appointed Sheriff-Depute of Selkirkshire.	1796. The Chase, and William and Helen. [Translated from Bürger.] 1799. Goetz of Berlichingen. [Translated from Goethe.] 1800. The Eve of St. John: a Border Ballad. 1802. Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border. 1804. Sir Tristrem: a Metrical Romance, by Thomas of Ercildoune. [Edited.] 1805. The Lay of the Last Minstrel: a Poem. 1806. Original Memoirs written during the great Civil War. [Edited.] 1808. Marmion: a Tale of Flodden Field. Memoirs of Captain George Carleton. [Edited.] Works of John Dryden. [Edited.] Memoirs of Robert Carey. [Edited.] Strutt's Queenhoo-Hall: a Romance. [Edited.]	1774. Burke, Speech on American Taxation. 1775. Burke, Speech on Conciliation with America. 1786. Burns, Poems chiefly in the Scottish dialect. 1790. Burke, Reflections on the Revolution in France. 1791. Boswell, Life of Dr. Johnson. 1794. Ann Radcliffe, Mysteries of Udolpho. 1798. Wordsworth and Coleridge, Lyrical Ballads.	1772. Coleridge born. 1774. Goldsmith died. Southey born. 1775. War of American Independence. Jane Austen born. 1778. Rousseau and Voltaire died. 1784. Johnson died. 1788. Byron born. 1789. States General meet at Versailles; Fall of Bastille. 1792. Shelley born. 1793. Execution of Louis XVI. Fall of the Girondists. 1794. Fall of Robespierre. 1795. Keats and Carlyle born. 1796. Burns died. 1800. Macaulay born. 1801. J. H. Newman born. 1802. Treaty of Amiens. 1805. Battle of Trafalgar. 1806. Longfellow born.
1806. Appointed one of the Clerks of Session.		1807. Byron, Hours of Idleness. Moore, Irish Melodies.	

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE—Continued.

SCOTT'S LIFE.	WORKS.	LITERATURE.	BIOGRAPHY AND HISTORY.
1812. Removal to Abbotsford.	1809. State Papers and Letters of Sir R. Sadler. [Edited.] Lord Somers' Collection of Scarce and Valuable Tracts. [Edited, 1809-15.]	1809. Byron, English Bards and Scotch Reviewers.	1809. Mrs. Browning Darwin, and Tennyson born.
	1810. English Minstrelsy. [Edited.] The Lady of the Lake: a Poem.		
	1811. The Vision of Don Roderick: a Poem. Secret History of the Court of James the First. [Edited.]	1811. Jane Austen, Sense and Sensibility.	1811. Thackeray born.
1812. Removal to Abbotsford.	1813. Rokeby: a Poem. Sir P. Warwick's Memoirs of the Reign of King Charles I. [Edited.] The Bridal of Triermain: or, The Vale of St. John.	1812. Byron, Child Harold (Cantos I. and II.).	1812. Browning and Dickens born. Napoleon invades Russia.
	1814. Works of Jonathan Swift. [Edited.] The Letting of Humours Blood into the Head Vaine. [Edited.] Waverley. The Border Antiquities. [1814-17.]	1814. Byron, The Corsair, Lara. Wordsworth, The Excursion.	1814. Congress of Vienna.
	1815. The Lord of the Isles: a Poem. Guy Mannering. The Field of Waterloo: a Poem. Memoirs of the Somervilles. [Edited.]	1815. Byron, Hebrew Melodies, Southey, Carmen Triumpnale.	1815. Battle of Waterloo.
	1816. Paul's Letters to His Kinsfolk. The Antiquary. Tales of My Landlord. First series. [The Black Dwarf, Old Mortality.]	1816. Byron, Child Harold (Canto III.), Siege of Corinth, Prisoner of Chillon, Parisina. Coleridge, Christabel. Shelley, Alastor.	
	1817. Harold the Dauntless: a Poem.	1817. Byron, Manfred. Keats, Poems.	1817. Jane Austen died.

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE—Continued.

SCOTT'S LIFE.	WORKS.	LITERATURE.	BIOGRAPHY AND HISTORY.
	1818. Rob Roy. Tales of My Landlord. Second series. [The Heart of Midlothian.]	1818. Byron, Child Harold (Canto IV.). Keats, Endymion. Shelley, The Revolt of Islam. Irving, The Sketch Book.	
	1819. Tales of My Landlord. Third series. [The Bride of Lammermoor, The Legend of Montrose.] The Visionary, Nos. 1, 2, 3. Description of the Regalia of Scotland.	1819. Byron, Don Juan (Cantos I. and II.). Crabbe, Tales of the Hall. Shelley, The Cenci.	1819. Ruskin, Geo. Eliot, Kingsley, and Lowell born.
1820. Knighted.	1820. Ivanhoe. The Monastery. The Abbot. Memorials of the Halibutons. [Edited.] Carey's Trivial Poems and Triolets. [Edited.]	1820. Keats, Lamia, Isabella, Eve of St. Agnes, Hyperion. Shelley, Prometheus Unbound.	1820. Spencer and Tyndall born.
	1821. The Novelist's Library. [Edited, 1821-24.] Frank's Northern Memoirs. [Edited.] Kenilworth.	1821. Byron, Marino Faliero De Quincey, Confessions of an Opium Eater. Cooper, The Spy.	1821. Keats died.
1822. George IV. visits Edinburgh.	1822. The Pirate. Chronological Notes of Scottish Affairs, taken chiefly from the diary of Lord Fountainhall. [Edited.] Halidon Hill: a Dramatic Sketch. Military Memoirs of the Great Civil War. [Edited.] The Fortunes of Nigel. Peveril of the Peak.	1822. Irving, Bracebridge Hall.	1822. Shelley died. Matthew Arnold born.
	1823. Quentin Durward. 1824. St. Ronan's Well. Redgauntlet. 1825. Tales of the Crusaders. [The Betrothed, The Talisman.]		1824. Byron died. 1825. Huxley born.

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE—Continued.

SCOTT'S LIFE.	WORKS.	LITERATURE.	BIOGRAPHY AND HISTORY.
1826. Failure of the <i>Balantynes</i> . Death of Lady Scott.	1826. Provincial Antiquities of Scotland. Thoughts on the Proposed Change of Currency. Woodstock. 1827. Life of Napoleon Buonaparte. Chronicles of the Canongate. First series. [The Highland Widow, The Two Drovers, The Surgeon's Daughter.] Memoirs of the Marchioness de la Rochejaquelein. [Translation.] 1828. Miscellaneous Prose Works, first collected in 6 vols. Tales of a Grandfather. Religious Discourses. Chronicles of the Canongate. Second series. [Saint Valentine's Day; or, The Fair Maid of Perth.] 1829. Tales of a Grandfather. Second series. Memorials of George Ballantyne. [Edited.] Anne of Geierstein. 1830. Tales of a Grandfather. Third series. The Doom of Devorgoil: a Melo-Drama. Letters on Demonology. The History of Scotland. [Lardner's Cabinet Cyclopædia.] 1831. Tales of a Grandfather. Fourth series. 1832. Tales of My Landlord. Fourth series. [Count Robert of Paris, Castle Dangerous.]	1826. Cooper. Last of the Mohicans. 1827. Alfred and Charles Tennyson, Poems by Two Brothers. 1830. Alfred Tennyson, Poems chiefly Lyrical. Victor Hugo, Hernani. 1831. Poe, The Raven.	1830. Revolution in France. 1832. Goethe died. English Reform Bill passed.
1831. Journey to Italy.			
1832. Sept. 21. Died.			

THE LADY OF THE LAKE

CANTO FIRST.

THE CHASE.

HARP of the North! that mouldering long hast hung
On the witch-elm that shades Saint Fillan's spring,
And down the fitful breeze thy numbers flung,
Till envious ivy did around thee cling,
Muffling with verdant ringlet every string,—
O Minstrel Harp, still must thine accents sleep?
'Mid rustling leaves and fountains murmuring,
Still must thy sweeter sounds their silence keep,
Nor bid a warrior smile, nor teach a maid to weep?

Not thus, in ancient days of Caledon, 10
Was thy voice mute amid the festal crowd,
When lay of hopeless love, or glory won,
Aroused the fearful, or subdued the proud.
At each according pause, was heard aloud
Thine ardent symphony sublime and high!
Fair dames and crested chiefs attention bow'd;
For still the burden of thy minstrelsy
Was Knighthood's dauntless deed, and Beauty's match-
less eye.

O wake once more! how rude soe'er the hand
That ventures o'er thy magic maze to stray; 20
O wake once more! though scarce my skill command
Some feeble echoing of thine earlier lay:

Though harsh and faint, and soon to die away,
And all unworthy of thy nobler strain,
Yet if one heart throb higher at its sway,
The wizard note has not been touch'd in vain.
Then silent be no more! Enchantress, wake again!

I.

The stag at eve had drunk his fill,
Where danced the moon on Monan's rill,
And deep his midnight lair had made
In lone Glenartney's hazel shade;
But, when the sun his beacon red
Had kindled on Benvoirlich's head,
The deep-mouth'd bloodhound's heavy bay
Resounded up the rocky way,
And faint, from farther distance borne,
Were heard the clanging hoof and horn.

30

II.

As chief, who hears his warder call,
"To arms! the foemen storm the wall,"
The antler'd monarch of the waste
Sprung from his heathery couch in haste.
But, ere his fleet career he took,
The dew-drops from his flanks he shook;
Like crested leader proud and high,
Toss'd his beam'd frontlet to the sky;
A moment gazed adown the dale,
A moment snuff'd the tainted gale,
A moment listen'd to the cry,
That thicken'd as the chase drew nigh;
Then, as the headmost foes appear'd,
With one brave bound the copse he clear'd,
And, stretching forward free and far,
Sought the wild heaths of Uam-Var.

40

50

III.

Yell'd on the view the opening pack;
Rock, glen, and cavern paid them back;
To many a mingled sound at once
The awaken'd mountain gave response.
A hundred dogs bay'd deep and strong,
Clatter'd a hundred steeds along,
Their peal the merry horns rung out, 60
A hundred voices join'd the shout;
With hark and whoop and wild halloo,
No rest Benvoirlich's echoes knew.
Far from the tumult fled the roe,
Close in her covert cower'd the doe,
The falcon, from her cairn on high,
Cast on the rout a wondering eye,
Till far beyond her piercing ken
The hurricane had swept the glen.
Faint, and more faint, its failing din 70
Return'd from cavern, cliff, and linn,
And silence settled, wide and still,
On the lone wood and mighty hill.

IV.

Less loud the sounds of silvan war
Disturb'd the heights of Uam-Var,
And roused the cavern, where, 'tis told,
A giant made his den of old;
For ere that steep ascent was won,
High in his pathway hung the sun,
And many a gallant, stay'd perforce, 80
Was fain to breathe his faltering horse,
And of the trackers of the deer,
Scarce half the lessening pack was near;
So shrewdly on the mountain side
Had the bold burst their mettle tried.

V.

The noble stag was pausing now
Upon the mountain's southern brow,
Where broad extended, far beneath,
The varied realms of fair Menteith.
With anxious eye he wander'd o'er 90
Mountain and meadow, moss and moor,
And ponder'd refuge from his toil,
By far Lochard or Aberfoyle.
But nearer was the copsewood grey,
That waved and wept on Loch Achray,
And mingled with the pine-trees blue
On the bold cliffs of Benvenue.
Fresh vigour with the hope return'd,
With flying foot the heath he spurn'd,
Held westward with unwearied race, 100
And left behind the panting chase.

VI.

'Twere long to tell what steeds gave o'er,
As swept the hunt through Cambusmore;
What reins were tighten'd in despair,
When rose Benledi's ridge in air;
Who flagg'd upon Bochastle's heath,
Who shunn'd to stem the flooded Teith,—
For twice that day, from shore to shore,
The gallant stag swam stoutly o'er.
Few were the stragglers, following far, 110
That reach'd the lake of Vennachar;
And when the Brigg of Turk was won,
The headmost horseman rode alone.

VII.

Alone, but with unabated zeal,
That horseman plied the scourge and steel;

For jaded now, and spent with toil,
Emboss'd with foam, and dark with soil,
While every gasp with sobs he drew,
The labouring stag strain'd full in view.
Two dogs of black Saint Hubert's breed, 120
Unmatch'd for courage, breath, and speed,
Fast on his flying traces came,
And all but won that desperate game;
For, scarce a spear's length from his haunch,
Vindictive toil'd the bloodhounds stanch;
Nor nearer might the dogs attain,
Nor farther might the quarry strain.
Thus up the margin of the lake,
Between the precipice and brake,
O'er stock and rock their race they take. 130

VIII.

The hunter mark'd that mountain high,
The lone lake's western boundary,
And deem'd the stag must turn to bay,
Where that huge rampart barr'd the way;
Already glorying in the prize,
Measured his antlers with his eyes;
For the death-wound and death-halloo,
Muster'd his breath, his whinyard drew;—
But thundering as he came prepared,
With ready arm and weapon bared, 140
The wily quarry shunn'd the shock,
And turn'd him from the opposing rock;
Then, dashing down a darksome glen,
Soon lost to hound and hunter's ken,
In the deep Trosachs' wildest nook
His solitary refuge took.
There, while close couch'd the thicket shed
Cold dews and wild-flowers on his head,
He heard the baffled dogs in vain

Rave through the hollow pass amain, 150
Chiding the rocks that yell'd again.

IX.

Close on the hounds the hunter came,
To cheer them on the vanish'd game;
But, stumbling in the rugged dell,
The gallant horse exhausted fell.
The impatient rider strove in vain
To rouse him with the spur and rein,
For the good steed, his labours o'er,
Stretch'd his stiff limbs, to rise no more;
Then, touch'd with pity and remorse, 160
He sorrow'd o'er the expiring horse.
"I little thought, when first thy rein
I slack'd upon the banks of Seine,
That Highland eagle e'er should feed
On thy fleet limbs, my matchless steed!
Woe worth the chase, woe worth the day,
That costs thy life, my gallant grey!"

X.

Then through the dell his horn resounds,
From vain pursuit to call the hounds.
Back limp'd, with slow and crippled pace, 170
The sulky leaders of the chase;
Close to their master's side they press'd,
With drooping tail and humbled crest;
But still the dingle's hollow throat
Prolong'd the swelling bugle-note.
The owlets started from their dream,
The eagles answered with their scream,
Round and around the sounds were cast,
Till echo seem'd an answering blast;
And on the hunter hied his way, 180
To join some comrades of the day;

Yet often paused, so strange the road,
So wondrous were the scenes it show'd.

XI.

The western waves of ebbing day
Roll'd o'er the glen their level way;
Each purple peak, each flinty spire,
Was bathed in floods of living fire.
But not a setting beam could glow
Within the dark ravines below,
Where twined the path in shadow hid, 190
Round many a rocky pyramid,
Shooting abruptly from the dell
Its thunder-splinter'd pinnacle;
Round many an insulated mass,
The native bulwarks of the pass,
Huge as the tower which builders vain
Presumptuous piled on Shinar's plain.
The rocky summits, split and rent,
Form'd turret, dome, or battlement,
Or seem'd fantastically set 200
With cupola or minaret,
Wild crests as pagod ever deck'd,
Or mosque of Eastern architect.
Nor were these earth-born castles bare,
Nor lack'd they many a banner fair;
For, from their shiver'd brows display'd,
Far o'er the unfathomable glade,
All twinkling with the dewdrops sheen,
The brier-rose fell in streamers green,
And creeping shrubs, of thousand dyes, 210
Waved in the west-wind's summer sighs.

XII.

Boon nature scatter'd, free and wild,
Each plant or flower, the mountain's child.

Here eglantine embalm'd the air,
Hawthorn and hazel mingled there;
The primrose pale and violet flower,
Found in each clift a narrow bower;
Fox-glove and night-shade, side by side,
Emblems of punishment and pride,
Group'd their dark hues with every stain 220
The weather-beaten crags retain.
With boughs that quaked at every breath,
Grey birch and aspen wept beneath;
Aloft, the ash and warrior oak
Cast anchor in the rifted rock;
And, higher yet, the pine-tree hung
His shatter'd trunk, and frequent flung,
Where seem'd the cliffs to meet on high,
His bows athwart the narrow'd sky.
Highest of all, where white peaks glanced, 230
Where glist'ning streamers waved and danced,
The wanderer's eye could barely view
The summer heaven's delicious blue;
So wondrous wild, the whole might seem
The scenery of a fairy dream.

XIII.

Onward, amid the copse 'gan peep
A narrow inlet, still and deep,
Affording scarce such breadth of brim
As served the wild duck's brood to swim.
Lost for a space, through thickets veering, 240
But broader when again appearing,
Tall rocks and tufted knolls their face
Could on the dark-blue mirror trace;
And farther as the hunter stray'd,
Still broader sweep its channels made.
The shaggy mounds no longer stood,
Emerging from entangled wood,

But, wave-encircled, seem'd to float,
Like castle girdled with its moat;
Yet broader floods extending still 250
Divide them from their parent hill,
Till each, retiring, claims to be
An islet in an inland sea.

XIV.

And now, to issue from the glen,
No pathway meets the wanderer's ken,
Unless he climb, with footing nice,
A far projecting precipice.
The broom's tough roots his ladder made,
The hazel saplings lent their aid;
And thus an airy point he won, 260
Where, gleaming with the setting sun,
One burnish'd sheet of living gold,
Loch Katrine lay beneath him roll'd,
In all her length far winding lay,
With promontory, creek, and bay,
And islands that, empurpled bright,
Floated amid the livelier light,
And mountains that like giants stand,
To sentinel enchanted land.
High on the south, huge Benvenue 270
Down on the lake in masses threw
Crag, knolls, and mounds, confusedly hurl'd,
The fragments of an earlier world;
A wildering forest feather'd o'er
His ruin'd sides and summit hoar,
While on the north, through middle air,
Ben-an heaved high his forehead bare.

XV.

From the steep promontory gazed
The stranger, raptured and amazed,

And, "What a scene were here," he cried, 280
 "For princely pomp, or churchman's pride!
 On this bold brow, a lordly tower;
 In that soft vale, a lady's bower;
 On yonder meadow, far away,
 The turrets of a cloister grey;
 How blithely might the bugle-horn
 Chide, on the lake, the lingering morn!
 How sweet, at eve, the lover's lute
 Chime, when the groves were still and mute!
 And, when the midnight moon should lave 290
 Her forehead in the silver wave,
 How solemn on the ear would come
 The holy matin's distant hum,
 While the deep peal's commanding tone
 Should wake, in yonder islet lone,
 A sainted hermit from his cell,
 To drop a bead with every knell—
 And bugle, lute, and bell, and all,
 Should each bewilder'd stranger call
 To friendly feast, and lighted hall. 300

XVI.

"Blithe were it then to wander here!
 But now,—beshrew yon nimble deer,—
 Like that same hermit's, thin and spare,
 The copse must give my evening fare;
 Some mossy bank my couch must be,
 Some rustling oak my canopy.
 Yet pass we that; the war and chase
 Give little choice of resting-place;—
 A summer night, in greenwood spent,
 Were but to-morrow's merriment: 310
 But hosts may in these wilds abound,
 Such as are better miss'd than found;
 To meet with Highland plunderers here,

Were worse than loss of steed or deer.—
I am alone;—my bugle-strain
May call some straggler of the train;
Or, fall the worst that may betide,
Ere now this falchion has been tried.”

XVII.

But scarce again his horn he wound,
When lo! forth starting at the sound, 320
From underneath an aged oak,
That slanted from the islet rock,
A damsel guider of its way,
A little skiff shot to the bay,
That round the promontory steep
Led its deep line in graceful sweep,
Eddying, in almost viewless wave,
The weeping willow-twigg to lave,
And kiss, with whispering sound and slow,
The beach of pebbles bright as snow. 330
The boat had touch'd this silver strand,
Just as the hunter left his stand,
And stood conceal'd amid the brake,
To view this Lady of the Lake.
The maiden paused, as if again
She thought to catch the distant strain.
With head up-raised, and look intent,
And eye and ear attentive bent,
And locks flung back, and lips apart,
Like monument of Grecian art, 340
In listening mood, she seem'd to stand,
The guardian Naiad of the strand.

XVIII.

And ne'er did Grecian chisel trace
A Nymph, a Naiad, or a Grace,
Of finer form, or lovelier face!

What though the sun, with ardent frown,
 Had slightly tinged her cheek with brown,—
 The sportive toil, which, short and light,
 Had dyed her glowing hue so bright,
 Served too in hastier swell to show 350
 Short glimpses of a breast of snow :
 What though no rule of courtly grace
 To measured mood had train'd her pace,—
 A foot more light, a step more true,
 Ne'er from the heath-flower dash'd the dew;
 E'en the slight harebell raised its head,
 Elastic from her airy tread:
 What though upon her speech there hung
 The accents of the mountain tongue,—
 Those silver sounds, so soft, so dear, 360
 The listener held his breath to hear!

XIX.

A chieftain's daughter seem'd the maid;
 Her satin snood, her silken plaid,
 Her golden brooch such birth betray'd.
 And seldom was a snood amid
 Such wild luxuriant ringlets hid,
 Whose glossy black to shame might bring
 The plumage of the raven's wing;
 And seldom o'er a breast so fair,
 Mantled a plaid with modest care, 370
 And never brooch the folds combined
 Above a heart more good and kind.
 Her kindness and her worth to spy,
 You need but gaze on Ellen's eye;
 Not Katrine, in her mirror blue,
 Gives back the shaggy banks more true,
 Than every free-born glance confess'd
 The guileless movements of her breast;
 Whether joy danced in her dark eye.

Or woe or pity claim'd a sigh, 380
Or filial love was glowing there,
Or meek devotion pour'd a prayer,
Or tale of injury call'd forth
The indignant spirit of the North.
One only passion unreveal'd
With maiden pride the maid conceal'd,
Yet not less purely felt the flame;—
O! need I tell that passion's name!

XX.

Impatient of the silent horn,
Now on the gale her voice was borne:— 390
“Father!” she cried; the rocks around
Loved to prolong the gentle sound.
A while she paused, no answer came,—
“Malcolm, was thine the blast?” the name
Less resolutely utter'd fell,
The echoes could not catch the swell.
“A stranger I,” the huntsman said,
Advancing from the hazel shade.
The maid, alarm'd, with hasty oar,
Push'd her light shallop from the shore, 400
And when a space was gain'd between,
Closer she drew her bosom's screen.
(So forth the startled swan would swing,
So turn to prune his ruffled wing.)
Then safe, though flutter'd and amazed,
She paused, and on the stranger gazed.
Not his the form, nor his the eye,
That youthful maidens wont to fly.

XXI.

On his bold visage middle age
Had slightly press'd its signet sage, 410

Yet had not quench'd the open truth
 And fiery vehemence of youth;
 Forward and frolic glee was there,
 The will to do, the soul to dare,
 The sparkling glance, soon blown to fire,
 Of hasty love, or headlong ire.
 His limbs were cast in manly mould,
 For hardy sports or contest bold;
 And though in peaceful garb array'd,
 And weaponless, except his blade,
 His stately mien as well implied
 A high-born heart, a martial pride,
 As if a baron's crest he wore,
 And sheathed in armour trode the shore.
 Slighting the petty need he show'd,
 He told of his benighted road;
 His ready speech flow'd fair and free,
 In phrase of gentlest courtesy;
 Yet seem'd that tone, and gesture bland,
 Less used to sue than to command.

420

430

XXII.

A while the maid the stranger eyed,
 And, reassured, at length replied,
 That Highland halls were open still
 To wilder'd wanderers of the hill.
 "Nor think you unexpected come
 To yon lone isle, our desert home;
 Before the heath had lost the dew,
 This morn, a couch was pull'd for you;
 On yonder mountain's purple head
 Have ptarmigan and heath-cock bled,
 And our broad nets have swept the mere,
 To furnish forth your evening cheer."—
 "Now, by the rood, my lovely maid,
 Your courtesy has err'd," he said;

440

“No right have I to claim, misplaced,
The welcome of expected guest.
A wanderer, here by fortune tost,
My way, my friends, my courser lost,
I ne’er before, believe me, fair,
Have ever drawn your mountain air,
Till on this lake’s romantic strand,
I found a fay in fairy land!”— 450

XXIII.

“I well believe,” the maid replied,
As her light skiff approach’d the side,—
“I well believe, that ne’er before
Your foot has trod Loch Katrine’s shore;
But yet, as far as yesternight,
Old Allan-bane foretold your plight,—
A grey-haired sire, whose eye intent
Was on the vision’d future bent. 460
He saw your steed, a dappled grey,
Lie dead beneath the birchen way;
Painted exact your form and mien,
Your hunting suit of Lincoln green,
That tassell’d horn so gaily gilt,
That falchion’s crooked blade and hilt,
That cap with heron plumage trim,
And yon two hounds so dark and grim.
He bade that all should ready be,
To grace a guest of fair degree; 470
But light I held his prophecy,
And deem’d it was my father’s horn,
Whose echoes o’er the lake were borne.”

XXIV.

The stranger smiled:—“Since to your home
A destined errant knight I come,

Announced by prophet sooth and old,
 Doom'd, doubtless, for achievement bold,
 I'll lightly front each high emprise,
 For one kind glance of those bright eyes.
 Permit me, first, the task to guide
 Your fairy frigate o'er the tide." 480
 The maid, with smile suppress'd and sly,
 The toil unwonted saw him try;
 For seldom sure, if e'er before,
 His noble hand had grasped an oar:
 Yet with main strength his strokes he drew,
 And o'er the lake the shallop flew;
 With heads erect, and whimpering cry,
 The hounds behind their passage ply.
 Nor frequent does the bright oar break 490
 The dark'ning mirror of the lake,
 Until the rocky isle they reach,
 And moor their shallop on the beach.

XXV.

The stranger view'd the shore around;
 'Twas all so close with copsewood bound,
 Nor track nor pathway might declare
 That human foot frequented there,
 Until the mountain-maiden show'd
 A clambering unsuspected road,
 That winded through the tangled screen, 500
 And open'd on a narrow green,
 Where weeping birch and willow round
 With their long fibres swept the ground.
 Here, for retreat in dangerous hour,
 Some chief had framed a rustic bower.

XXVI.

It was a lodge of ample size,
 But strange of structure and device;

Of such materials as around
The workman's hand had readiest found.
Lopp'd of their boughs, their hoar trunks bared, 510
And by the hatchet rudely squared,
To give the walls their destined height,
The sturdy oak and ash unite;
While moss and clay and leaves combined
To fence each crevice from the wind.
The lighter pine-trees, overhead,
Their slender length for rafters spread,
And wither'd heath and rushes dry
Supplied a russet canopy.
Due westward, fronting to the green, 520
A rural portico was seen,
Aloft on native pillars borne,
Of mountain fir with bark unshorn,
Where Ellen's hand had taught to twine
The ivy and Idæan vine,
The clematis, the favour'd flower
Which boasts the name of virgin-bower,
And every hardy plant could bear
Loch Katrine's keen and searching air.
An instant in this porch she staid, 530
And gaily to the stranger said,
"On heaven and on thy lady call,
And enter the enchanted hall!"

XXVII.

"My hope, my heaven, my trust must be,
My gentle guide, in following thee."—
He cross'd the threshold—and a clang
Of angry steel that instant rang.
To his bold brow his spirit rush'd,
But soon for vain alarm he blush'd,
When on the floor he saw display'd, 540
Cause of the din, a naked blade

Dropp'd from the sheath, that careless flung
 Upon a stag's huge antlers swung;
 For all around, the walls to grace,
 Hung trophies of the fight or chase:
 A target there, a bugle here,
 A battle-axe, a hunting spear,
 And broadswords, bows, and arrows store,
 With the tusk'd trophies of the boar.
 Here grins the wolf as when he died,
 And there the wild-cat's brindled hide
 The frontlet of the elk adorns,
 Or mantles o'er the bison's horns;
 Pennons and flags defaced and stain'd,
 That blackening streaks of blood retain'd,
 And deer-skins, dappled, dun, and white,
 With otter's fur and seal's unite,
 In rude and uncouth tapestry all,
 To garnish forth the silvan hall.

550

XXVIII.

The wondering stranger round him gazed,
 And next the fallen weapon raised:—
 Few were the arms whose sinewy strength,
 Sufficed to stretch it forth at length.
 And as the brand he poised and sway'd,
 "I never knew but one," he said,
 "Whose stalwart arm might brook to wield
 A blade like this in battle-field."
 She sigh'd, then smiled and took the word;
 "You see the guardian champion's sword:
 As light it trembles in his hand,
 As in my grasp a hazel wand;
 My sire's tall form might grace the part
 Of Ferragus, or Ascabart;
 But in the absent giant's hold
 Are women now, and menials old."

560

570

XXIX.

The mistress of the mansion came,
Mature of age, a graceful dame;
Whose easy step and stately port
Had well become a princely court,
To whom, though more than kindred knew, 580
Young Ellen gave a mother's due.
Meet welcome to her guest she made,
And every courteous rite was paid
That hospitality could claim,
Though all unask'd his birth and name.
Such then the reverence to a guest,
That fellest foe might join the feast,
And from his deadliest foeman's door
Unquestion'd turn, the banquet o'er.
At length his rank the stranger names, 590
"The Knight of Snowdoun, James Fitz-James;
Lord of a barren heritage,
Which his brave sires, from age to age,
By their good swords had held with toil;
His sire had fallen in such turmoil,
And he, God wot, was forced to stand
Oft for his right with blade in hand.
This morning, with Lord Moray's train,
He chased a stalwart stag in vain,
Outstripp'd his comrades, miss'd the deer, 600
Lost his good steed, and wander'd here."

XXX.

Fain would the knight in turn require
The name and state of Ellen's sire.
Well show'd the elder lady's mien,
That courts and cities she had seen;
Ellen, though more her looks display'd
The simple grace of silvan maid,

In speech and gesture, form and face,
 Show'd she was come of gentle race.
 'Twere strange in ruder rank to find 610
 Such looks, such manners, and such mind.
 Each hint the Knight of Snowdown gave,
 Dame Margaret heard with silence grave;
 Or Ellen, innocently gay,
 Turn'd all inquiry light away:—
 “Weird women we! by dale and down
 We dwell, afar from tower and town.
 We stem the flood, we ride the blast,
 On wandering knights our spells we cast;
 While viewless minstrels touch the string, 620
 'Tis thus our charmed rhymes we sing.”
 She sung, and still a harp unseen
 Fill'd up the symphony between.

XXXI.

SONG.

Soldier, rest! thy warfare o'er,
 Sleep the sleep that knows no breaking:
 Dream of battled fields no more,
 Days of danger, nights of waking.
 In our isle's enchanted hall,
 Hands unseen thy couch are strewing,
 Fairy strains of music fall, 630
 Every sense in slumber dewing.
 Soldier, rest! thy warfare o'er,
 Dream of fighting fields no more:
 Sleep the sleep that knows not breaking,
 Morn of toil, nor night of waking.

No rude sound shall reach thine ear,
 Armour's clang, or war-steed champing,
 Trump nor pibroch summon here
 Mustering clan, or squadron tramping.

Yet the lark's shrill fife may come 640
 At the day-break from the fallow,
 And the bittern sound his drum,
 Booming from the sedgy shallow.
 Ruder sounds shall none be near,
 Guards nor warders challenge here,
 Here's no war-steed's neigh and champing,
 Shouting clans or squadrons stamping.

XXXII.

She paused—then, blushing, led the lay
 To grace the stranger of the day.
 Her mellow notes awhile prolong 650
 The cadence of the flowing song,
 Till to her lips in measured frame
 The minstrel verse spontaneous came.

SONG—(*Continued*).

Huntsman, rest! thy chase is done,
 While our slumbrous spells assail ye,
 Dream not, with the rising sun,
 Bugles here shall sound reveillé.
 Sleep! the deer is in his den;
 Sleep! thy hounds are by thee lying;
 Sleep! nor dream in yonder glen, 660
 How thy gallant steed lay dying.
 Huntsman, rest! thy chase is done.
 Think not of the rising sun
 For at dawning to assail ye,
 Here no bugles sound reveillé.'

XXXIII.

The hall was clear'd—the stranger's bed
 Was there of mountain heather spread,

Where oft a hundred guests had lain,
 And dream'd their forest sports again.
 But vainly did the heath-flower shed 670
 Its moorland fragrance round his head;
 Not Ellen's spell had lull'd to rest
 The fever of his troubled breast.
 In broken dreams the image rose
 Of varied perils, pains, and woes:
 His steed now flounders in the brake,
 Now sinks his barge upon the lake;
 Now leader of a broken host,
 His standard falls, his honour's lost.
 Then,—from my couch may heavenly might 680
 Chase that worst phantom of the night!—
 Again return'd the scenes of youth,
 Of confident undoubting truth;
 Again his soul he interchanged
 With friends whose hearts were long estranged.
 They come, in dim procession led,
 The cold, the faithless, and the dead;
 As warm each hand, each brow as gay,
 As if they parted yesterday.
 And doubt distracts him at the view— 690
 O were his senses false or true?
 Dream'd he of death, or broken vow,
 Or is it all a vision now?

XXXIV.

At length, with Ellen in a grove
 He seem'd to walk, and speak of love;
 She listen'd with a blush and sigh,
 His suit was warm, his hopes were high.
 He sought her yielded hand to clasp,
 And a cold gauntlet met his grasp:
 The phantom's sex was changed and gone, 700
 Upon its head a helmet shone;

Slowly enlarged to giant size,
With darken'd cheek and threatening eyes,
The grisly visage, stern and hoar,
To Ellen still a likeness bore.—
He woke, and, panting with allright,
Recall'd the vision of the night.
The hearth's decaying brands were red,
And deep and dusky lustre shed,
Half showing, half concealing, all 710
The uncouth trophies of the hall.
Mid those the stranger fixed his eye,
Where that huge falchion hung on high,
And thoughts on thoughts, a countless throng,
Rush'd, chasing countless thoughts along,
Until, the giddy whirl to cure,
He rose, and sought the moonshine pure.

XXXV.

The wild-rose, eglantine, and broom,
Wasted around their rich perfume:
The birch-trees wept in fragrant balm, 720
The aspens slept beneath the calm;
The silver light, with quivering glance,
Play'd on the water's still expanse,—
Wild were the heart whose passion's sway
Could rage beneath the sober ray!
He felt its calm, that warrior guest,
While thus he communed with his breast:—
“Why is it, at each turn I trace
Some memory of that exiled race?
Can I not mountain-maiden spy, 730
But she must bear the Douglas eye?
Can I not view a Highland brand,
But it must match the Douglas hand?
Can I not frame a fever'd dream,
But still the Douglas is the theme?

I'll dream no more—by manly mind
Not even in sleep is will resign'd.
My midnight orisons said o'er,
I'll turn to rest, and dream no more.”
His midnight orisons he told,
A prayer with every bead of gold,
Consign'd to heaven his cares and woes,
And sunk in undisturb'd repose;
Until the heath-cock shrilly crew,
And morning dawn'd on Benvenue.

CANTO SECOND.

THE ISLAND.

1.

AT morn the black-cock trims his jetty wing,
'Tis morning prompts the linnet's blithest lay,
All Nature's children feel the matin spring
Of life reviving, with reviving day;
And while yon little bark glides down the bay,
Wafting the stranger on his way again,
Morn's genial influence roused a minstrel grey,
And sweetly o'er the lake was heard thy strain,
Mix'd with the sounding harp, O white-hair'd Allan-bane!

II.

SONG.

Not faster yonder rowers' might 10
Flings from their oars the spray,
Not faster yonder rippling bright,
That tracks the shallop's course in light,
Melts in the lake away,
Than men from memory erase
The benefits of former days;
Then, stranger, go! good speed the while,
Nor think again of the lonely isle.

High place to thee in royal court,
High place in battle line, 20
Good hawk and hound for silvan sport,

Where beauty sees the brave resort,
The honour'd meed be thine!
True be thy sword, thy friend sincere,
Thy lady constant, kind, and dear,
And lost in love, and friendship's smile
Be memory of the lonely isle.

III.

SONG—(*Continued*).

But if beneath yon southern sky
A plaided stranger roam,
Whose drooping crest and stifled sigh, 30
And sunken check and heavy eye,
Pine for his Highland home;
Then, warrior, then be thine to show
The care that soothes a wanderer's woe;
Remember then thy hap erewhile,
A stranger in the lonely isle.

Or if on life's uncertain main
Mishap shall mar thy sail;
If faithful, wise, and brave in vain,
Woe, want, and exile thou sustain 40
Beneath the fickle gale;
Waste not a sigh on fortune changed,
On thankless courts, or friends estranged,
But come where kindred worth shall smile,
To greet thee in the lonely isle.

IV.

As died the sounds upon the tide,
The shallop reach'd the mainland side,
And ere his onward way he took,
The stranger cast a lingering look,
Where easily his eye might reach 50
The harper on the islet beach,

Reclined against a blighted tree,
As wasted, grey, and worn as he.
To minstrel meditation given,
His reverend brow was raised to heaven,
As from the rising sun to claim
A sparkle of inspiring flame.
His hand, reclined upon the wire,
Seem'd watching the awakening fire;
So still he sate as those who wait
Till judgment speak the doom of fate;
So still as if no breeze might dare
To lift one lock of hoary hair;
So still as life itself were fled,
In the last sound his harp had sped.

60

V.

Upon a rock with lichens wild,
Beside him Ellen sate and smiled.—
Smiled she to see the stately drake
Lead forth his fleet upon the lake,
While her vex'd spaniel, from the beach,
Bay'd at the prize beyond his reach?
Yet tell me, then, the maid who knows,
Why deepen'd on her cheek the rose?—
Forgive, forgive, Fidelity!
Perchance the maiden smiled to see
Yon parting lingerer wave adieu,
And stop and turn to wave anew;
And, lovely ladies, ere your ire
Condemn the heroine of my lyre,
Show me the fair would scorn to spy
And prize such conquest of her eye!

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VI.

While yet he loiter'd on the spot,
It seem'd as Ellen mark'd him not;

But when he turn'd him to the glade,
 One courteous parting sign she made;
 And after, oft the knight would say,
 That not when prize of festal day
 Was dealt him by the brightest fair
 Who e'er wore jewel in her hair,
 So highly did his bosom swell,
 As at that simple mute farewell.
 Now with a trusty mountain-guide,
 And his dark stag-hounds by his side,
 He parts—the maid, unconscious still,
 Watch'd him wind slowly round the hill;
 But when his stately form was hid,
 The guardian in her bosom chid—
 “Thy Malcolm! vain and selfish maid!”
 ’Twas thus upbraiding conscience said,—
 “Not so had Malcolm idly hung
 On the smooth phrase of Southern tongue;
 Not so had Malcolm strain'd his eye
 Another step than thine to spy.—
 Wake, Allan-bane,” aloud she cried,
 To the old minstrel by her side,—
 “Arouse thee from thy moody dream!
 I'll give thy harp heroic theme,
 And warm thee with a noble name;
 Pour forth the glory of the Græme!”
 Scarce from her lip the word had rush'd,
 When deep the conscious maiden blush'd;
 For of his clan, in hall and bower,
 Young Malcolm Græme was held the flower.

90

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VII.

The minstrel waked his harp—three times
 Arose the well-known martial chimes,
 And thrice their high heroic pride
 In melancholy murmurs died.

“Vainly thou bid'st, O noble maid,”
Clasping his wither'd hands, he said,
“Vainly thou bid'st me wake the strain, 120
Though all unwont to bid in vain.
Alas! than mine a mightier hand
Has tuned my harp, my strings has spann'd!
I touch the chords of joy, but low
And mournful answer notes of woe;
And the proud march, which victors tread,
Sinks in the wailing for the dead.
O well for me, if mine alone
That dirge's deep prophetic tone!
If, as my tuneful fathers said, 130
This harp, which erst Saint Modan sway'd,
Can thus its master's fate foretell,
Then welcome be the minstrel's knell!

VIII.

“But ah! dear lady, thus it sigh'd
The eve thy sainted mother died;
And such the sounds which, while I strove
To wake a lay of war or love,
Came marring all the festal mirth,
Appalling me who gave them birth,
And, disobedient to my call, 140
Wail'd loud through Bothwell's banner'd hall,
Ere Douglasses, to ruin driven,
Were exiled from their native heaven.—
Oh! if yet worse mishap and woe,
My master's house must undergo,
Or aught but weal to Ellen fair,
Brood in these accents of despair,
No future bard, sad Harp! shall fling
Triumph or rapture from thy string;
One short, one final strain shall flow, 150
Fraught with unutterable woe,

Then shiver'd shall thy fragments lie,
Thy master cast him down and die!"

IX.

Soothing she answer'd him—"Assuage,
Mine honour'd friend, the fears of age;
All melodies to thee are known,
That harp has rung, or pipe has blown,
In Lowland vale or Highland glen,
From Tweed to Spey—what marvel, then,
At times unbidden notes should rise,
Confusedly bound in memory's ties,
Entangling, as they rush along,
The war-march with the funeral song?—
Small ground is now for boding fear;
Obscure, but safe, we rest us here.
My sire, in native virtue great,
Resigning lordship, lands, and state,
Not then to fortune more resign'd,
Than yonder oak might give the wind;
The graceful foliage storms may reave,
The noble stem they cannot grieve.
For me,"—she stoop'd, and, looking round,
Pluck'd a blue hare-bell from the ground,—
"For me, whose memory scarce conveys
An image of more splendid days,
This little flower, that loves the lea,
May well my simple emblem be;
It drinks heaven's dew as blithe as rose
That in the king's own garden grows;
And when I place it in my hair,
Allan, a bard, is bound to swear
He ne'er saw coronet so fair."
Then playfully the chaplet wild
She wreath'd in her dark locks, and smiled.

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X.

Her smile, her speech, with winning sway,
Wiled the old harper's mood away.
With such a look as hermits throw,
When angels stoop to soothe their woe,
He gazed, till fond regret and pride
Thrilled to a tear, then thus replied: 190
"Loveliest and best! thou little know'st
The rank, the honours, thou hast lost!
O might I live to see thee grace,
In Scotland's court, thy birth-right place,
To see my favourite's step advance,
The lightest in the courtly dance,
The cause of every gallant's sigh,
And leading star of every eye,
And theme of every minstrel's art,
The Lady of the Bleeding Heart!"— 200

XI.

"Fair dreams are these," the maiden cried,
(Light was her accent, yet she sigh'd:)
"Yet is this mossy rock to me
Worth splendid chair and canopy:
Nor would my footsteps spring more gay
In courtly dance than blithe strathspey,
Nor half so pleased mine ear incline
To royal minstrel's lay as thine.
And then for suitors proud and high,
To bend before my conquering eye.— 210
Thou, flattering bard! thyself wilt say,
That grim Sir Roderick owns its sway.
The Saxon scourge, Clar-Alpine's pride,
The terror of Loch Lomond's side,
Would, at my suit, thou know'st, delay
A Lennox foray—for a day."—

XII.

The ancient bard his glee repress'd:
 "Ill hast thou chosen theme for jest!
 For who, through all this western wild,
 Named Black Sir Roderick e'er, and smiled! 220
 In Holy-Rood a knight he slew;
 I saw, when back the dirk he drew,
 Courtiers give place before the stride
 Of the undaunted homicide;
 And since, though outlaw'd, hath his hand
 Full sternly kept his mountain land.
 Who else dared give—ah! woe the day,
 That I such hated truth should say—
 The Douglas, like a stricken deer,
 Disown'd by every noble peer, 230
 Even the rude refuge we have here?
 Alas, this wild marauding chief
 Alone might hazard our relief,
 And now thy maiden charms expand,
 Looks for his guerdon in thy hand;
 Full soon may dispensation sought,
 To back his suit, from Rome be brought.
 Then, though an exile on the hill,
 Thy father, as the Douglas, still
 Be held in reverence and fear; 240
 And though to Roderick thou'rt so dear,
 That thou might'st guide with silken thread,
 Slave of thy will, this chieftain dread;
 Yet, O loved maid, thy mirth refrain!
 Thy hand is on a lion's mane."—

XIII.

"Minstrel," the maid replied, and high
 Her father's soul glanced from her eye,
 "My debts to Roderick's house I know:

All that a mother could bestow,
To Lady Margaret's care I owe, 250
Since first an orphan in the wild
She sorrow'd o'er her sister's child;
To her brave chieftain son, from ire
Of Scotland's king who shrouds my sire,
A deeper, holier debt is owed;
And, could I pay it with my blood,
Allan! Sir Roderick should command
My blood, my life,—but not my hand.
Rather will Ellen Douglas dwell
A votaress in Maronnan's cell; 260
Rather through realms beyond the sea,
Seeking the world's cold charity,
Where ne'er was spoke a Scottish word,
And ne'er the name of Douglas heard,
An outcast pilgrim will she rove,
Than wed the man she cannot love.

XIV.

“Thou shakest, good friend, thy tresses grey—
That pleading look, what can it say
But what I own?—I grant him brave,
But wild as Bracklinn's thundering wave; 270
And generous—save vindictive mood,
Or jealous transport, chafe his blood:
I grant him true to friendly band,
As his claymore is to his hand;
But O! that very blade of steel
More mercy for a foe would feel:
I grant him liberal, to fling
Among his clan the wealth they bring,
When back by lake and glen they wind,
And in the Lowland leave behind, 280
Where once some pleasant hamlet stood,
A mass of ashes slaked with blood.

The hand that for my father fought,
I honour, as his daughter ought;
But can I clasp it reeking red,
From peasants slaughter'd in their shed?
No! wildly while his virtues gleam,
They make his passions darker seem,
And flash along his spirit high,
Like lightning o'er the midnight sky. 290
While yet a child,—and children know,
Instinctive taught, the friend and foe,—
I shudder'd at his brow of gloom,
His shadowy plaid, and sable plume;
A maiden grown, I ill could bear
His haughty mien and lordly air:
But, if thou join'st a suitor's claim,
In serious mood, to Roderick's name,
I thrill with anguish! or, if e'er
A Douglas knew the word, with fear. 300
To change such odious theme were best,—
What think'st thou of our stranger guest?"—

XV.

“What think I of him?—woe the while
That brought such wanderer to our isle!
Thy father's battle-brand, of yore
For Tine-man forged by fairy lore,
What time he leagued, no longer foes,
His Border spears with Hotspur's bows,
Did, self-unscabbarded, foreshow
The footstep of a secret foe. 310
If courtly spy hath harbour'd here,
What may we for the Douglas fear?
What for this island, deem'd of old
Clan-Alpine's last and surest hold?
If neither spy nor foe, I pray
What yet may jealous Roderick say?

—Nay, wave not thy disdainful head,
Bethink thee of the discord dread,
That kindled when at Beltane game
Thou ledst the dance with Malcolm Græme; 320
Still, though thy sire the peace renew'd,
Smoulders in Roderick's breast the feud;
Beware!—But hark, what sounds are these?
My dull ears catch no faltering breeze,
No weeping birch nor aspens wake,
Nor breath is dimpling in the lake,
Still is the canna's hoary beard,
Yet, by my minstrel faith, I heard—
And hark again! some pipe of war
Sends the bold pibroch from afar." 330

XVI.

Far up the lengthen'd lake were spied
Four darkening specks upon the tide,
That, slow enlarging on the view,
Four mann'd and masted barges grew,
And, bearing downwards from Glengyle,
Steer'd full upon the lonely isle;
The point of Brianchoil they pass'd,
And, to the windward as they cast,
Against the sun they gave to shine
The bold Sir Roderick's banner'd Pine. 340
Nearer and nearer as they bear,
Spears, pikes, and axes flash in air.
Now might you see the tartans brave,
And plaids and plumage dance and wave:
Now see the bonnets sink and rise,
As his tough oar the rower plies;
See, flashing at each sturdy stroke,
The wave ascending into smoke;
See the proud pipers on the bow,
And mark the gaudy streamers flow 350

From their loud chanters down, and sweep
 The furrow'd bosom of the deep,
 As, rushing through the lake amain,
 They plied the ancient Highland strain.

XVII.

Ever, as on they bore, more loud
 And louder rung the pibroch proud.
 At first the sound, by distance tame,
 Mellow'd along the waters came,
 And, lingering long by cape and bay,
 Wail'd every harsher note away,
 Then bursting bolder on the ear,
 The clan's shrill Gathering they could hear;
 Those thrilling sounds, that call the might
 Of Old Clan-Alpine to the fight.
 Thick beat the rapid notes, as when
 The mustering hundreds shake the glen,
 And hurrying at the signal dread,
 The batter'd earth returns their tread.
 Then prelude light, of livelier tone,
 Express'd their merry marching on,
 Ere peal of closing battle rose,
 With mingled outcry, shrieks, and blows;
 And mimic din of stroke and ward,
 As broadsword upon target jarr'd;
 And groaning pause, ere yet again,
 Condensed, the battle yell'd amain;
 The rapid charge, the rallying shout,
 Retreat borne headlong into rout,
 And bursts of triumph, to declare
 Clan-Alpine's conquest—all were there.
 Nor ended thus the strain; but slow
 Sunk in a moan prolong'd and low,
 And changed the conquering clarion swell,
 For wild lament o'er those that fell.

360

370

380

XVIII.

The war-pipes ceased; but lake and hill
Were busy with their echoes still;
And, when they slept, a vocal strain
Bade their hoarse chorus wake again,
While loud a hundred clansmen raise
Their voices in their chieftain's praise. 390
Each boatman, bending to his oar,
With measured sweep the burden bore,
In such wild cadence as the breeze
Makes through December's leafless trees.
The chorus first could Allan know,
"Roderick Vich Alpine, ho! iro!"
And near, and nearer as they row'd,
Distinct the martial ditty flow'd.

XIX.

BOAT SONG.

Hail to the Chief who in triumph advances!
Honour'd and bless'd be the ever-green Pine! 400
Long may the tree, in his banner that glances,
Flourish, the shelter and grace of our line!
Heaven send it happy dew,
Earth lend it sap anew,
Gayly to bourgeon, and broadly to grow,
While every Highland glen
Sends our shout back agen,
"Roderigh Vich Alpine dhu, ho! ieroe!"
Ours is no sapling, chance-sown by the fountain,
Blooming at Beltane, in winter to fade; 410
When the whirlwind has stripp'd every leaf on the moun-
tain,
The more shall Clan-Alpine exult in her shade.

Moor'd in the rifted rock,
 Proof to the tempest's shock,
 Firmer he roots him the ruder it blow;
 Menteith and Breadalbane, then,
 Echo his praise agen,
 "Roderigh Vich Alpine dhu, ho! ieroe!"

XX.

Proudly our pibroch has thrill'd in Glen Fruin,
 And Bannochar's groans to our slogan replied; 420
 Glen Luss and Ross-dhu, they are smoking in ruin,
 And the best of Loch Lomond lie dead on her side.
 Widow and Saxon maid
 Long shall lament our raid,
 Think of Clan-Alpine with fear and with woe;
Lennox and Leven-glen
 Shake when they hear agen
 "Roderigh Vich Alpine dhu, ho! ieroe!"

Row, vassals, row, for the pride of the Highlands!
 Stretch to your oars, for the ever-green Pine! 430
 O, that the rose-bud that graces yon islands,
 Were wreathed in a garland around him to twine!
 O that some seedling gem,
 Worthy such noble stem,
 Honour'd and bless'd in their shadow might grow!
 Loud should Clan-Alpine then
 Ring from her deepmost glen,
 "Roderigh Vich Alpine dhu, ho! ieroe!"

XXI.

With all her joyful female band,
 Had Lady Margaret sought the strand. 440
 Loose on the breeze their tresses flew,
 And high their snowy arms they threw,

As echoing back with shrill acclaim,
And chorus wild, the chieftain's name;
While, prompt to please, with mother's art,
The darling passion of his heart,
The dame called Ellen to the strand,
To greet her kinsman ere he land:
"Come, loiterer, come! a Douglas thou,
And shun to wreath a victor's brow?"— 450
Reluctantly and slow, the maid
The unwelcome summoning obey'd,
And, when a distant bugle rung,
In the mid-path aside she sprung:—
"List, Allan-bane! From mainland cast
I hear my father's signal blast.
Be ours," she cried, "the skiff to guide,
And waft him from the mountain side."
Then, like a sunbeam, swift and bright,
She darted to her shallop light, 460
And, eagerly while Roderick scann'd,
For her dear form, his mother's band,
The islet far behind her lay,
And she had landed in the bay.

XXII.

Some feelings are to mortals given,
With less of earth in them than heaven:
And if there be a human tear
From passion's dross refined and clear,
A tear so limpid and so meek,
It would not stain an angel's cheek, 470
'Tis that which pious fathers shed
Upon a duteous daughter's head!
And as the Douglas to his breast
His darling Ellen closely press'd,
Such holy drops her tresses steep'd,
Though 'twas an hero's eye that weep'd.

Nor while on Ellen's faltering tongue
 Her filial welcomes crowded hung,
 Mark'd she, that fear (affection's proof)
 Still held a graceful youth aloof;
 No! not till Douglas named his name,
 Although the youth was Malcolm Græme.

480

XXIII.

Allan, with wistful look the while,
 Mark'd Roderick landing on the isle;
 His master piteously he eyed,
 Then gazed upon the chieftain's pride,
 Then dash'd, with hasty hand, away
 From his dimm'd eye the gathering spray;
 And Douglas, as his hand he laid
 On Malcolm's shoulder, kindly said,
 "Canst thou, young friend, no meaning spy
 In my poor follower's glistening eye?
 I'll tell thee:—he recalls the day,
 When in my praise he led the lay
 O'er the arch'd gate of Bothwell proud,
 While many a minstrel answer'd loud,
 When Percy's Norman pennon, won
 In bloody field, before me shone,
 And twice ten knights, the least a name
 As mighty as yon chief may claim,
 Gracing my pomp, behind me came.
 Yet trust me, Malcolm, not so proud
 Was I of all that marshall'd crowd,
 Though the waned crescent own'd my might,
 And in my train troop'd lord and knight,
 Though Blantyre hymn'd her holiest lays,
 And Bothwell's bards flung back my praise,
 As when this old man's silent tear,
 And this poor maid's affection dear,
 A welcome give more kind and true

490

500

510

Than aught my better fortunes knew.
Forgive, my friend, a father's boast,
O! it out-beggars all I lost!"

XXIV.

Delightful praise!—like summer rose,
That brighter in the dew-drop glows,
The bashful maiden's cheek appear'd,
For Douglas spoke, and Malcolm heard.
The flush of shame-faced joy to hide,
The hounds, the hawk, her cares divide;
The loved caresses of the maid 520
The dogs with crouch and whimper paid;
And, at her whistle, on her hand
The falcon took her favourite stand,
Closed his dark wing, relax'd his eye,
Nor, though unhooded, sought to fly.
And, trust, while in such guise she stood,
Like fabled goddess of the wood,
That if a father's partial thought
O'erweigh'd her worth, and beauty aught,
Well might the lover's judgment fail 530
To balance with a juster scale;
For with each secret glance he stole,
The fond enthusiast sent his soul.

XXV.

Of stature tall, and slender frame,
But firmly knit, was Malcolm Græme.
The belted plaid and tartan hose
Did ne'er more graceful limbs disclose;
His flaxen hair, of sunny hue,
Curl'd closely round his bonnet blue.
Train'd to the chase, his eagle eye 540
The ptarmigan in snow could spy:

Each pass, by mountain, lake, and heath,
 He knew, through Lennox and Menteith;
 Vain was the bound of dark-brown doe,
 When Malcolm bent his sounding bow,
 And scarce that doe, though wing'd with fear,
 Outstripp'd in speed the mountaineer:
 Right up Ben-Lomond could he press,
 And not a sob his toil confess.
 His form accorded with a mind 550
 Lively and ardent, frank and kind;
 A blither heart, till Ellen came,
 Did never love nor sorrow tame;
 It danced as lightsome in his breast
 As play'd the feather on his crest.
 Yet friends, who nearest knew the youth,
 His scorn of wrong, his zeal for truth,
 And bards, who saw his features bold,
 When kindled by the tales of old,
 Said, were that youth to manhood grown, 560
 Not long should Roderick Dhu's renown
 Be foremost voiced by mountain fame,
 But quail to that of Malcolm Græme.

XXVI.

Now back they wend their watery way,
 And, "O my sire!" did Ellen say,
 "Why urge thy chase so far astray?
 And why so late return'd? And why"—
 The rest was in her speaking eye.
 "My child, the chase I follow far,
 'Tis mimicry of noble war; 570
 And with that gallant pastime reft
 Were all of Douglas I have left.
 I met young Malcolm as I stray'd
 Far eastward, in Glenfinlas' shade,
 Nor stray'd I safe; for, all around,

Hunters and horsemen scour'd the ground.
This youth, though still a royal ward,
Risk'd life and land to be my guard,
And through the passes of the wood
Guided my steps, not unpursued; 580
And Roderick shall his welcome make,
Despite old spleen, for Douglas' sake.
Then must he seek Strath-Endrick glen,
Nor peril aught for me agen."

XXVII.

Sir Roderick, who to meet them came,
Redden'd at sight of Malcolm Græme,
Yet, not in action, word, or eye,
Fail'd aught in hospitality.
In talk and sport they whiled away
The morning of that summer day; 590
But at high noon a courier light
Held secret parley with the knight,
Whose moody aspect soon declared,
That evil were the news he heard.
Deep thought seem'd toiling in his head;
Yet was the evening banquet made,
Ere he assembled round the flame
His mother, Douglas, and the Græme,
And Ellen, too; then cast around
His eyes, then fix'd them on the ground, 600
As studying phrase that might avail
Best to convey unpleasant tale.
Long with his dagger's hilt he play'd,
Then raised his haughty brow, and said:—

XXVIII.

"Short be my speech;—nor time affords,
Nor my plain temper, glozing words.

Kinsman and father,—if such name
Douglas vouchsafe to Roderick's claim;
Mine honour'd mother:—Ellen—why,
My cousin, turn away thine eye?—
And Græme, in whom I hope to know
Full soon a noble friend or foe,
When age shall give thee thy command,
And leading in thy native land,—
List all!—The King's vindictive pride
Boasts to have tamed the Border-side,
Where chiefs, with hound and hawk who came
To share their monarch's silvan game,
Themselves in bloody toils were snared;
And when the banquet they prepared,
And wide their loyal portals flung,
O'er their own gateway struggling hung.
Loud cries their blood from Meggat's mead,
From Yarrow braes, and banks of Tweed,
Where the lone streams of Ettrick glide,
And from the silver Teviot's side;
The dales, where martial clans did ride,
Are now one sheep-walk, waste and wide.
This tyrant of the Scottish throne,
So faithless, and so ruthless known,
Now hither comes; his end the same,
The same pretext of silvan game.
What grace for Highland chiefs, judge ye
By fate of Border chivalry.
Yet more; amid Glenfinlas' green,
Douglas, thy stately form was seen.
This by espial sure I know:
Your counsel in the streight I show."

XXIX.

Ellen and Margaret fearfully
Sought comfort in each other's eye,

Then turn'd their ghastly look, each one,
This to her sire, that to her son.
The hasty colour went and came
In the bold cheek of Malcolm Græme;
But from his glance it well appear'd,
'Twas but for Ellen that he fear'd;
While, sorrowful, but undismay'd,
The Douglas thus his counsel said:—
“ Brave Roderick, though the tempest roar,
It may but thunder and pass o'er; 650
Nor will I here remain an hour,
To draw the lightning on thy bower;
For well thou know'st, at this grey head
The royal bolt were fiercest sped.
For thee, who, at thy king's command,
Canst aid him with a gallant band,
Submission, homage, humbled pride,
Shall turn the monarch's wrath aside.
Poor remnants of the Bleeding Heart,
Ellen and I will seek, apart, 660
The refuge of some forest cell,
There, like the hunted quarry, dwell,
Till on the mountain and the moor,
The stern pursuit be pass'd and o'er.”—

XXX.

“ No, by mine honour,” Roderick said,
“ So help me Heaven, and my good blade!
No, never! Blasted be yon Pine,
My fathers' ancient crest and mine,
If from its shade in danger part
The lineage of the Bleeding Heart! 670
Hear my blunt speech: Grant me this maid
To wife, thy counsel to mine aid;
To Douglas, leagued with Roderick Dhu,
Will friends and allies flock enow;

Like cause of doubt, distrust, and grief,
 Will bind to us each Western chief.
 When the loud pipes my bridal tell,
 The Links of Forth shall hear the knell,
 The guards shall start in Stirling's porch;
 And, when I light the nuptial torch,
 A thousand villages in flames
 Shall scare the slumbers of King James!
 —Nay, Ellen, blench not thus away,
 And, mother, cease these signs, I pray;
 I meant not all my heart might say.—
 Small need of inroad, or of fight,
 When the sage Douglas may unite
 Each mountain clan in friendly band,
 To guard the passes of their land,
 Till the foil'd king, from pathless glen,
 Shall bootless turn him home agen.”

680

690

XXXI.

There are who have, at midnight hour,
 In slumber scaled a dizzy tower,
 And, on the verge that beetled o'er
 The ocean tide's incessant roar,
 Dream'd calmly out their dangerous dream,
 Till waken'd by the morning beam;
 When, dazzled by the eastern glow,
 Such startler cast his glance below,
 And saw unmeasured depth around,
 And heard unintermitted sound,
 And thought the battled fence so frail,
 It waved like cobweb in the gale;—
 Amid his senses' giddy wheel,
 Did he not desperate impulse feel,
 Headlong to plunge himself below,
 And meet the worst his fears foreshow?—
 Thus, Ellen, dizzy and astound,

700

As sudden ruin yawn'd around,
By crossing terrors wildly toss'd, 710
Still for the Douglas fearing most,
Could scarce the desperate thought withstand,
To buy his safety with her hand.

XXXII.

Such purpose dread could Malcolm spy
In Ellen's quivering lip and eye,
And eager rose to speak—but ere
His tongue could hurry forth his fear,
Had Douglas mark'd the hectic strife,
Where death seem'd combating with life;
For to her cheek, in feverish flood, 720
One instant rush'd the throbbing blood,
Then ebbing back, with sudden sway,
Left its domain as wan as clay.
“Roderick, enough! enough!” he cried,
“My daughter cannot be thy bride;
Not that the blush to wooer dear,
Nor paleness that of maiden fear.
It may not be—forgive her, chief,
Nor hazard aught for our relief.
Against his sovereign, Douglas ne'er 730
Will level a rebellious spear.
'Twas I that taught his youthful hand
To rein a steed and wield a brand;
I see him yet, the princely boy!
Not Ellen more my pride and joy;
I love him still, despite my wrongs,
By hasty wrath, and slanderous tongues.
O seek the grace you well may find,
Without a cause to mine combined.”

XXXIII.

Twice through the hall the chieftain strode; 740
The waving of his tartans broad,
And darken'd brow, where wounded pride
With ire and disappointment vied,
Seem'd, by the torch's gloomy light,
Like the ill Demon of the night,
Stooping his pinions' shadowy sway
Upon the nighted pilgrim's way:
But, unrequited Love! thy dart
Plunged deepest its envenom'd smart,
And Roderick, with thine anguish stung, 750
At length the hand of Douglas wrung,
While eyes, that mock'd at tears before,
With bitter drops were running o'er.
The death-pangs of long-cherish'd hope
Scarce in that ample breast had scope,
But, struggling with his spirit proud,
Convulsive heaved its chequer'd shroud,
While every sob—so mute were all—
Was heard distinctly through the hall.
The son's despair, the mother's look, 760
Ill might the gentle Ellen brook;
She rose, and to her side there came,
To aid her parting steps, the Græme.

XXXIV.

Then Roderick from the Douglas broke—
As flashes flame through sable smoke,
Kindling its wreaths, long, dark, and low,
To one broad blaze of ruddy glow,
So the deep anguish of despair
Burst, in fierce jealousy, to air.
With stalwart grasp his hand he laid 770
On Malcolm's breast and belted plaid:

“Back, beardless boy!” he sternly said,
“Back, minion! hold’st thou thus at naught
The lesson I so lately taught?
This roof, the Douglas, and that maid,
Thank thou for punishment delay’d.”
Eager as greyhound on his game
Fiercely with Roderick grappled Græme.
“Perish my name, if aught afford
Its chieftain’s safety save his sword!” 780
Thus as they strove, their desperate hand
Griped to the dagger or the brand,
And death had been—but Douglas rose,
And thrust between the struggling foes
His giant strength:—“Chieftains, forego!
I hold the first who strikes, my foe.—
Madmen, forbear your frantic jar!
What! is the Douglas fall’n so far,
His daughter’s hand is doom’d the spoil
Of such dishonourable broil!” 790
Sullen and slowly they unclasp,
As struck with shame, their desperate grasp,
And each upon his rival glared,
With foot advanced, and blade half bared.

XXXV.

Ere yet the brands aloft were flung
Margaret on Roderick’s mantle hung,
And Malcolm heard his Ellen’s scream,
As falter’d through terrific dream.
Then Roderick plunged in sheath his sword
And veil’d his wrath in scornful word: 800
“Rest safe till morning; pity ’twere
Such cheek should feel the midnight air!
Then mayest thou to James Stuart tell,
Roderick will keep the lake and fell,
Nor lackey, with his freeborn clan,

The pageant pomp of earthly man.
More would he of Clan-Alpine know,
Thou canst our strength and passes show.—
Malise, what ho ! ”—his henchman came ;
“ Give our safe-conduct to the Græme.” 810
Young Malcolm answer’d, calm and bold,
“ Fear nothing for thy favourite hold ;
The spot an angel deigned to grace,
Is bless’d, though robbers haunt the place.
Thy churlish courtesy for those
Reserve, who fear to be thy foes.
As safe to me the mountain way
At midnight as in blaze of day,
Though with his boldest at his back
Even Roderick Dhu beset the track.— 820
Brave Douglas,—lovely Ellen,—nay,
Nought here of parting will I say.
Earth does not hold a lonesome glen,
So secret, but we meet agen.—
Chieftain ! we too shall find an hour,”—
He said, and left the silvan bower.

XXXVI.

Old Allan follow’d to the strand,
(Such was the Douglas’s command,)
And anxious told, how, on the morn,
The stern Sir Roderick deep had sworn, 830
The Fiery Cross should circle o’er
Dale, glen, and valley, down, and moor.
Much were the peril to the Græme,
From those who to the signal came ;
Far up the lake ’twere safest land,
Himself would row him to the strand.
He gave his counsel to the wind,
While Malcolm did, unheeding, bind,
Round dirk and pouch and broadsword roll’d,

His ample plaid in tighten'd fold,
And stripp'd his limbs to such array,
As best might suit the watery way,— 840

XXXVII.

Then spoke abrupt: "Farewell to thee,
Pattern of old fidelity!"
The minstrel's hand he kindly press'd,—
"O! could I point a place of rest!
My sovereign holds in ward my land,
My uncle leads my vassal band;
To tame his foes, his friends to aid,
Poor Malcolm has but heart and blade. 850
Yet, if there be one faithful Græme,
Who loves the chieftain of his name,
Not long shall honour'd Douglas dwell,
Like hunted stag in mountain cell;
Nor, ere yon pride-swoll'n robber dare,—
I may not give the rest to air!
Tell Roderick Dhu, I owed him nought,
Not the poor service of a boat,
To waft me to yon mountain-side."
Then plunged he in the flashing tide. 860
Bold o'er the flood his head he bore,
And stoutly steer'd him from the shore;
And Allan strain'd his anxious eye,
Far 'mid the lake his form to spy.
Darkening across each puny wave,
To which the moon her silver gave,
Fast as the cormorant could skim,
The swimmer plied each active limb;
Then landing in the moonlight dell,
Loud shouted of his weal to tell. 870
The minstrel heard the far halloo,
And joyful from the shore withdrew.

CANTO THIRD.

THE GATHERING.

I.

TIME rolls his ceaseless course. The race of yore,
Who danced our infancy upon their knee,
And told our marvelling boyhood legends store,
Of their strange ventures happ'd by land or sea,
How are they blotted from the things that be!
How few, all weak and wither'd of their force,
Wait on the verge of dark eternity,
Like stranded wrecks, the tide returning hoarse,
To sweep them from our sight! Time rolls his ceaseless
course.

Yet live there still who can remember well, 10
How, when a mountain chief his bugle blew,
Both field and forest, dingle, cliff, and dell,
And solitary heath, the signal knew;
And fast the faithful clan around him drew,
What time the warning note was keenly wound,
What time aloft their kindred banner flew,
While clamorous war-pipes yell'd the gathering sound,
And while the Fiery Cross glanced, like a meteor, round.

II.

The summer dawn's reflected hue
To purple changed Loch Katrine blue; 20
Mildly and soft the western breeze
Just kiss'd the lake, just stirr'd the trees,

And the pleased lake, like maiden coy,
Trembled but dimpled not for joy;
The mountain-shadows on her breast
Were neither broken nor at rest;
In bright uncertainty they lie,
Like future joys to Fancy's eye.
The water-lily to the light
Her chalice rear'd of silver bright; 30
The doe awoke, and to the lawn,
Begemm'd with dew-drops, led her fawn;
The grey mist left the mountain side,
The torrent show'd its glistening pride;
Invisible in flecked sky,
The lark sent down her revelry;
The blackbird and the speckled thrush
Good-morrow gave from brake and bush;
In answer coo'd the cushat dove
Her notes of peace, and rest, and love. 40

III.

No thought of peace, no thought of rest,
Assuaged the storm in Roderick's breast.
With sheathed broadsword in his hand,
Abrupt he paced the islet strand,
And eyed the rising sun, and laid
His hand on his impatient blade.
Beneath a rock, his vassals' care
Was prompt the ritual to prepare,
With deep and deathful meaning fraught; 50
For such Antiquity had taught
Was preface meet, ere yet abroad
The Cross of Fire should take its road.
The shrinking band stood oft aghast
At the impatient glance he cast;—
Such glance the mountain eagle threw,
As, from the cliffs of Benvenue,

She spread her dark sails on the wind,
And, high in middle heaven reclined,
With her broad shadow on the lake,
Silenced the warblers of the brake.

60

IV.

A heap of wither'd boughs was piled,
Of juniper and rowan wild,
Mingled with shivers from the oak,
Rent by the lightning's recent stroke.
Brian, the Hermit, by it stood,
Barefooted, in his frock and hood.
His gristed beard and matted hair
Obscured a visage of despair;
His naked arms and legs, seam'd o'er,
The scars of frantic penance bore.
That monk, of savage form and face,
The impending danger of his race
Had drawn from deepest solitude,
Far in Benharrow's bosom rude.
Not his the mien of Christian priest,
But Druid's, from the grave released,
Whose harden'd heart and eye might brook
On human sacrifice to look;
And much, 'twas said, of heathen lore
Mix'd in the charms he mutter'd o'er.
The hallow'd creed gave only worse
And deadlier emphasis of curse;
No peasant sought that hermit's prayer,
His cave the pilgrim shunn'd with care,
The eager huntsman knew his bound,
And in mid chase call'd off his hound;
Or if, in lonely glen or strath,
The desert-dweller met his path,
He pray'd, and sign'd the cross between,
While terror took devotion's mien.

70

80

90

V.

Of Brian's birth strange tales were told.
His mother watch'd a midnight fold,
Built deep within a dreary glen,
Where scatter'd lay the bones of men,
In some forgotten battle slain,
And bleach'd by drifting wind and rain.
It might have tamed a warrior's heart,
To view such mockery of his art!
The knot-grass fetter'd there the hand
Which once could burst an iron band; 100
Beneath the broad and ample bone,
That buckler'd heart to fear unknown,
A feeble and a timorous guest,
The field-fare framed her lowly nest;
There the slow blind-worm left his slime
On the fleet limbs that mock'd at time;
And there, too, lay the leader's skull,
Still wreathed with chaplet, flush'd and full,
For heath-bell with her purple bloom
Supplied the bonnet and the plume. 110
All night, in this sad glen, the maid
Sate, shrouded in her mantle's shade:
She said, no shepherd sought her side,
No hunter's hand her snood untied,
Yet ne'er again to braid her hair
The virgin snood did Alice wear;
Nor sought she, from that fatal night,
Or holy church or blessed rite, 120
But lock'd her secret in her breast,
And died in travail, unconfess'd.

VI.

Alone, among his young compeers,
Was Brian from his infant years:

A moody and heart-broken boy,
Estranged from sympathy and joy,
Bearing each taunt which careless tongue
On his mysterious lineage flung.
Whole nights he spent by moonlight pale,
To wood and stream his hap to wail, 130
Till, frantic, he as truth received
What of his birth the crowd believed,
And sought, in mist and meteor fire,
To meet and know his Phantom Sire!
In vain, to soothe his wayward fate,
The cloister oped her pitying gate;
In vain the learning of the age
Unclasp'd the sable-letter'd page;
Even in its treasures he could find
Food for the fever of his mind. 140
Eager he read whatever tells
Of magic, cabala, and spells,
And every dark pursuit allied
To curious and presumptuous pride;
Till with fired brain and nerves o'erstrung,
And heart with mystic horrors wrung,
Desperate he sought Benharrow's den,
And hid him from the haunts of men.

VII.

The desert gave him visions wild,
Such as might suit the spectre's child. 150
Where with black cliffs the torrents toil,
He watch'd the wheeling eddies boil,
Till, from their foam, his dazzled eyes
Beheld the River Demon rise;
The mountain mist took form and limb,
Of noontide hag, or goblin grim;
The midnight wind came wild and dread,
Swell'd with the voices of the dead;

Far on the future battle-heath
His eyes beheld the ranks of death: 160
Thus the lone seer, from mankind hurl'd,
Shaped forth a disembodied world.
One lingering sympathy of mind
Still bound him to the mortal kind;
The only parent he could claim
Of ancient Alpine lineage came.
Late had he heard, in prophet's dream,
The fatal Ben-Shie's boding scream;
Sounds, too, had come in midnight blast
Of charging steeds, careering fast 170
Along Benharrow's shingly side,
Where mortal horseman ne'er might ride;
The thunderbolt had split the pine,—
All augur'd ill to Alpine's line.
He girt his loins, and came to show
The signals of impending woe,
And now stood prompt to bless or ban,
As bade the chieftain of his clan.

VIII.

'Twas all prepared;—and from the rock,
A goat, the patriarch of the flock, 180
Before the kindling pile was laid,
And pierced by Roderick's ready blade.
Patient the sickening victim eyed
The life-blood ebb, in crimson tide,
Down his clogg'd beard and shaggy limb,
Till darkness glazed his eyeballs dim.
The grisly priest, with murmuring prayer,
A slender crosslet form'd with care,
A cubit's length in measure due;
The shaft and limbs were rods of yew, 190
Whose parents in Inch-Cailliach wave
Their shadows o'er Clan-Alpine's grave,

And, answering Lomond's breezes deep,
Soothe many a chieftain's endless sleep.
The Cross, thus form'd, he held on high,
With wasted hand, and haggard eye,
And strange and mingled feelings woke,
While his anathema he spoke.

IX.

"Woe to the clansman, who shall view
This symbol of sepulchral yew,
Forgetful that its branches grew
Where weep the heavens their holiest dew
On Alpine's dwelling low!

200

Deserter of his chieftain's trust,
He ne'er shall mingle with their dust,
But, from his sires and kindred thrust,
Each clansman's execration just
Shall doom him wrath and woe."

He paused;—the word the vassals took,
With forward step and fiery look,
On high their naked brands they shook,
Their clattering targets wildly strook;

210

And first in murmur low,
Then, like the billow in his course,
That far to seaward finds his source,
And flings to shore his muster'd force,
Burst, with loud roar, their answer hoarse,

"Woe to the traitor, woe!"

Ben-an's grey scalp the accents knew,
The joyous wolf from cover drew,
The exulting eagle scream'd afar,—
They knew the voice of Alpine's war.

220

X.

The shout was hush'd on lake and fell,
The monk resumed his mutter'd spell:

Dismal and low its accents came,
The while he scathed the Cross with flame;
And the few words that reach'd the air,
Although the holiest name was there,
Had more of blasphemy than prayer.
But when he shook above the crowd 230
Its kindled points, he spoke aloud:—
“Woe to the wretch, who fails to rear
At this dread sign the ready spear!
For, as the flames this symbol sear,
His home, the refuge of his fear,
A kindred fate shall know;
Far o'er its roof the volumed flame
Clan-Alpine's vengeance shall proclaim,
While maids and matrons on his name
Shall call down wretchedness and shame, 240
And infamy and woe.”
Then rose the cry of females, shrill
As goss-hawk's whistle on the hill,
Denouncing misery and ill,
Mingled with childhood's babbling trill
Of curses stammer'd slow;
Answering, with imprecation dread,
“Sunk be his home in embers red!
And cursed be the meanest shed
That e'er shall hide the houseless head, 250
We doom to want and woe!”
A sharp and shrieking echo gave,
Coir-Uriskin, thy goblin cave!
And the grey pass where birches wave,
On Beala-nam-bo.

XI.

Then deeper paused the priest anew,
And hard his labouring breath he drew,
While, with set teeth and clenched hand,

And eyes that glow'd like fiery brand,
He meditated curse more dread, 260
And deadlier, on the clansman's head,
Who, summon'd to his chieftain's aid
The signal saw and disobey'd.
The crosslet's points of sparkling wood,
He quench'd among the bubbling blood,
And, as again the sign he rear'd,
Hollow and hoarse his voice was heard:
"When flits this Cross from man to man,
Vich-Alpine's summons to his clan,
Burst be the ear that fails to heed! 270
Palsied the foot that shuns to speed!
May ravens tear the careless eyes,
Wolves make the coward heart their prize!
As sinks that blood-stream in the earth,
So may his heart's blood drench his hearth!
As dies in hissing gore the spark,
Quench thou his light, Destruction dark!
And be the grace to him denied,
Bought by this sign to all beside!"
He ceased; no echo gave agen 280
The murmur of the deep Amen.

XII.

Then Roderick, with impatient look,
From Brian's hand the symbol took:
"Speed, Malise, speed!" he said, and gave
The crosslet to his henchman brave.
"The muster-place be Lanrick mead—
Instant the time—speed, Malise, speed!"
Like heath-bird, when the hawks pursue,
A barge across Loch Katrine flew;
High stood the henchman on the prow; 290
So rapidly the barge-men row,
The bubbles, where they launched the boat,

Were all unbroken and afloat,
Dancing in foam and ripple still,
When it had near'd the mainland hill;
And from the silver beach's side
Still was the prow three fathom wide,
When lightly bounded to the land
The messenger of blood and brand.

XIII.

Speed, Malise, speed! the dun deer's hide 300
On fleeter foot was never tied.
Speed, Malise, speed! such cause of haste
Thine active sinews never braced.
Bend 'gainst the steepy hill thy breast,
Burst down like torrent from its crest;
With short and springing footstep pass
The trembling bog and false morass;
Across the brook like roebuck bound,
And thread the brake like questing hound;
The crag is high, the scaur is deep, 310
Yet shrink not from the desperate leap:
Parch'd are thy burning lips and brow,
Yet by the fountain pause not now;
Herald of battle, fate, and fear,
Stretch onward in thy fleet career!
The wounded hind thou track'st not now,
Pursuest not maid through greenwood bough,
Nor pliest thou now thy flying pace
With rivals in the mountain race;
But danger, death, and warrior deed 320
Are in thy course—speed, Malise, speed!

XIV.

Fast as the fatal symbol flies,
In arms the huts and hamlets rise;
From winding glen, from upland brown,

They pour'd each hardy tenant down.
 Nor slack'd the messenger his pace;
 He show'd the sign, he named the place,
 And, pressing forward like the wind,
 Left clamour and surprise behind.
 The fisherman forsook the strand,
 The swarthy smith took dirk and brand;
 With changed cheer, the mower blithe
 Left in the half-cut swathe the scythe;
 The herds without a keeper stray'd,
 The plough was in mid-furrow staid,
 The fale'ner toss'd his hawk away,
 The hunter left the stag at bay;
 Prompt at the signal of alarms,
 Each son of Alpine rush'd to arms;
 So swept the tumult and affray
 Along the margin of Achray.
 Alas, thou lovely lake! that e'er
 Thy banks should echo sounds of fear!
 The rocks, the bosky thickets, sleep
 So stilly on thy bosom deep,
 The lark's blithe carol, from the cloud,
 Seems for the scene too gaily loud.

330

340

XV.

Speed, Malise, speed! the lake is past,
 Duncraggan's huts appear at last,
 And peep, like moss-grown rocks, half seen,
 Half hidden in the copse so green;
 There mayst thou rest, thy labour done,
 Their lord shall speed the signal on.—
 As stoops the hawk upon his prey,
 The henchman shot him down the way.
 —What woeful accents load the gale?
 The funeral yell, the female wail!
 A gallant hunter's sport is o'er,

350

A valiant warrior fights no more.
Who, in the battle or the chase, 360
At Roderick's side shall fill his place!—
Within the hall, where torch's ray
Supplies the excluded beams of day,
Lies Duncan on his lowly bier,
And o'er him streams his widow's tear.
His stripling son stands mournful by,
His youngest weeps, but knows not why;
The village maids and matrons round
The dismal coronach resound.

XVI.

CORONACH.

He is gone on the mountain, 370
He is lost to the forest,
Like a summer-dried fountain,
When our need was the sorest.
The font, reappearing,
From the rain-drops shall borrow,
But to us comes no cheering,
To Duncan no morrow!
The hand of the reaper
Takes the ears that are hoary,
But the voice of the weeper 380
Wails manhood in glory.
The autumn winds rushing
Waft the leaves that are searest,
But our flower was in flushing,
When blighting was nearest.
Fleet foot on the correi,
Sage counsel in cumber,
Red hand in the foray,
How sound is thy slumber!
Like the dew on the mountain, 390

Like the foam on the river,
 Like the bubble on the fountain
 Thou art gone, and for ever!

XVII.

See Stumah, who, the bier beside,
 His master's corpse with wonder eyed,
 Poor Stumah! whom his least halloo
 Could send like lightning o'er the dew,
 Bristles his crest, and points his ears,
 As if some stranger step he hears.
 'Tis not a mourner's muffled tread,
 Who comes to sorrow o'er the dead,
 But headlong haste, or deadly fear,
 Urge the precipitate career.
 All stand aghast:—unheeding all,
 The henchman bursts into the hall;
 Before the dead man's bier he stood;
 Held forth the Cross besmear'd with blood;
 "The muster-place is Lanrick mead;
 Speed forth the signal! clansmen, speed!"

400

XVIII.

Angus, the heir of Duncan's line,
 Sprung forth and seized the fatal sign.
 In haste the stripling to his side
 His father's dirk and broadsword tied;
 But when he saw his mother's eye
 Watch him in speechless agony,
 Back to her open'd arms he flew,
 Press'd on her lips a fond adieu—
 "Alas!" she sobb'd,—“and yet be gone,
 And speed thee forth, like Duncan's son!”
 One look he cast upon the bier,
 Dash'd from his eye the gathering tear.

410

420

Breathed deep to clear his labouring breast,
And toss'd aloft his bonnet crest,
Then, like the high-bred colt, when, freed,
First he essays his fire and speed,
He vanish'd, and o'er moor and moss
Sped forward with the Fiery Cross.
Suspended was the widow's tear,
While yet his footsteps she could hear;
And when she mark'd the henchman's eye 430
Wet with unwonted sympathy,
"Kinsman," she said, "his race is run
That should have sped thine errand on;
The oak has fall'n,—the sapling bough
Is all Duncraggan's shelter now.
Yet trust I well, his duty done,
The orphan's God will guard my son.—
And you, in many a danger true,
At Duncan's hest your blades that drew,
To arms, and guard that orphan's head! 440
Let babes and women wail the dead."
Then weapon-clang, and martial call,
Resounded through the funeral hall,
While from the walls the attendant band
Snatch'd sword and targe, with hurried hand;
And short and flitting energy
Glanced from the mourner's sunken eye,
As if the sounds to warrior dear,
Might rouse her Duncan from his bier.
But faded soon that borrow'd force; 450
Grief claim'd his right, and tears their course.

XIX.

Benledi saw the Cross of Fire,
It glanced like lightning up Strath-Ire.
O'er dale and hill the summons flew,
Nor rest nor pause young Angus knew;

The tear that gather'd in his eye
 He left the mountain breeze to dry;
 Until, where Teith's young waters roll,
 Betwixt him and a wooded knoll,
 That graced the sable strath with green, 460
 The chapel of St. Bride was seen.
 Swoln was the stream, remote the bridge,
 But Angus paused not on the edge;
 Though the dark waves danced dizzily,
 Though reel'd his sympathetic eye,
 He dash'd amid the torrent's roar:
 His right hand high the crosslet bore,
 His left the pole-axe grasp'd, to guide
 And stay his footing in the tide.
 He stumbled twice—the foam splash'd high; 470
 With hoarser swell the stream raced by;
 And had he fall'n,—for ever there.
 Farewell Duncraggan's orphan heir!
 But still, as if in parting life,
 Firmer he grasp'd the Cross of strife,
 Until the opposing bank he gain'd
 And up the chapel pathway strain'd.

XX.

A blithesome rout, that morning tide,
 Had sought the chapel of St. Bride.
 Her troth Tombea's Mary gave 480
 To Norman, heir of Armandave.
 And, issuing from the Gothic arch,
 The bridal now resumed their march.
 In rude, but glad procession, came
 Bonneted sire and coif-clad dame;
 And plaided youth, with jest and jeer,
 Which snooded maiden would not hear:
 And children, that, unwitting why,
 Lent the gay shout their shrilly cry;

And minstrels, that in measures vied 490
Before the young and bonny bride,
Whose downcast eye and cheek disclose
The tear and blush of morning rose.
With virgin step, and bashful hand,
She held the kerchief's snowy band;
The gallant bridegroom, by her side,
Beheld his prize with victor's pride,
And the glad mother in her ear
Was closely whispering word of cheer.

XXI.

Who meets them at the churchyard gate? 500
The messenger of fear and fate!
Haste in his hurried accent lies,
And grief is swimming in his eyes.
All dripping from the recent flood,
Panting and travel-soil'd he stood,
The fatal sign of fire and sword
Held forth, and spoke the appointed word:
"The muster-place is Lanrick mead;
Speed forth the signal! Norman, speed!"
And must he change so soon the hand, 510
Just link'd to his by holy band,
For the fell Cross of blood and brand?
And must the day, so blithe that rose,
And promised rapture in the close,
Before its setting hour, divide
The bridegroom from the plighted bride?
O fatal doom!—it must! it must!
Clan-Alpine's cause, her chieftain's trust,
Her summons dread, brook no delay;
Stretch to the race—away! away! 520

XXII.

Yet slow he laid his plaid aside,
 And, lingering, eyed his lovely bride,
 Until he saw the starting tear
 Speak woe he might not stop to cheer;
 Then, trusting not a second look,
 In haste he sped him up the brook,
 Nor backward glanced, till on the heath
 Where Lubnaig's lake supplies the Teith.
 —What in the racer's bosom stirr'd?
 The sickening pang of hope deferr'd, 530
 And memory, with a torturing train
 Of all his morning visions vain.
 Mingled with love's impatience, came
 The manly thirst for martial fame;
 The stormy joy of mountaineers,
 Ere yet they rush upon the spears;
 And zeal for clan and chieftain burning,
 And hope, from well-fought field returning,
 With war's red honours on his crest,
 To clasp his Mary to his breast. 540
 Stung by such thoughts, o'er bank and brae,
 Like fire from flint he glanced away,
 While high resolve, and feeling strong,
 Burst into voluntary song.

XXIII.

SONG.

The heath this night must be my bed,
 The bracken curtain for my head,
 My lullaby the warder's tread,
 Far, far, from love and thee, Mary;
 To-morrow eve, more stilly laid,

My couch may be my bloody plaid,
My vesper song, thy wail, sweet maid!
It will not waken me, Mary! 550

I may not, dare not, fancy now
The grief that clouds thy lovely brow,
I dare not think upon thy vow,
And all it promised me, Mary.
No fond regret must Norman know;
When bursts Clan-Alpine on the foe,
His heart must be like bended bow,
His foot like arrow free, Mary. 560

A time will come with feeling fraught,
For, if I fall in battle fought,
Thy hapless lover's dying thought
Shall be a thought on thee, Mary.
And if return'd from conquer'd foes,
How blithely will the evening close,
How sweet the linnet sing repose,
To my young bride and me, Mary!

XXIV.

Not faster o'er thy heathery braes,
Balquidder, speeds the midnight blaze, 570
Rushing, in conflagration strong,
Thy deep ravines and dells along,
Wrapping thy cliffs in purple glow,
And reddening the dark lakes below;
Nor faster speeds it, nor so far,
As o'er thy heaths the voice of war.
The signal roused to martial coil
The sullen margin of Loch Voil,
Waked still Loch Doine, and to the source.
Alarm'd, Balvaig, thy swampy course; 580
Thence southward turn'd its rapid road

Adown Strath-Gartney's valley broad,
 Till rose in arms each man might claim
 A portion in Clan-Alpine's name,
 From the grey sire, whose trembling hand
 Could hardly buckle on his brand,
 To the raw boy, whose shaft and bow
 Were yet scarce terror to the crow.
 Each valley, each sequester'd glen,
 Muster'd its little horde of men, 590
 That met as torrents from the height
 In Highland dales their streams unite,
 Still gathering, as they pour along,
 A voice more loud, a tide more strong,
 Till at the rendezvous they stood
 By hundreds prompt for blows and blood,
 Each train'd to arms since life began,
 Owning no tie but to his clan,
 No oath, but by his chieftain's hand,
 No law, but Roderick Dhu's command. 600

XXV.

That summer morn had Roderick Dhu
 Survey'd the skirts of Benvenue,
 And sent his scouts o'er hill and heath,
 To view the frontiers of Menteith.
 All backward came with news of truce;
 Still lay each martial Græme and Bruce,
 In Rednoch courts no horsemen wait,
 No banner waved on Cardross gate,
 On Duchray's towers no beacon shone,
 Nor scared the herons from Loch Con; 610
 All seem'd at peace.—Now wot ye why
 The chieftain, with such anxious eye,
 Ere to the muster he repair,
 This western frontier scann'd with care? —
 In Benvenue's most darksome cleft,

A fair, though cruel, pledge was left;
For Douglas, to his promise true,
That morning from the isle withdrew,
And in a deep sequester'd dell
Had sought a low and lonely cell. 620
By many a bard, in Celtic tongue,
Has Coir-nan-Uriskin been sung;
A softer name the Saxons gave,
And call'd the grot the Goblin-cave.

XXVI.

It was a wild and strange retreat,
As e'er was trod by outlaw's feet.
The dell, upon the mountain's crest,
Yawn'd like a gash on warrior's breast;
Its trench had staid full many a rock, 630
Hurl'd by primeval earthquake shock
From Benvenue's grey summit wild,
And here, in random ruin piled,
They frown'd incumbent o'er the spot,
And form'd the rugged silvan grot.
The oak and birch, with mingled shade,
At noontide there a twilight made,
Unless when short and sudden shone
Some straggling beam on cliff or stone,
With such a glimpse as prophet's eye
Gains on thy depth, Futurity. 640
No murmur waked the solemn still,
Save tinkling of a fountain rill;
But when the wind chafed with the lake,
A sullen sound would upward break,
With dashing hollow voice, that spoke
The incessant war of wave and rock.
Suspended cliffs, with hideous sway,
Seem'd nodding o'er the cavern grey.
From such a den the wolf had sprung,

In such the wild-cat leaves her young;
Yet Douglas and his daughter fair
Sought for a space their safety there.
Grey Superstition's whisper dread
Debarr'd the spot to vulgar tread;
For there, she said, did fays resort,
And satyrs hold their silvan court,
By moonlight tread their mystic maze,
And blast the rash beholder's gaze.

650

XXVII.

Now eve, with western shadows long,
Floated on Katrine bright and strong,
When Roderick, with a chosen few,
Repass'd the heights of Benvenue.
Above the Goblin-cave they go,
Through the wild pass of Beal-nam-bo:
The prompt retainers speed before,
To launch the shallop from the shore,
For 'cross Loch Katrine lies his way
To view the passes of Achray,
And place his clansmen in array.
Yet lags the chief in musing mind,
Unwonted sight, his men behind.
A single page, to bear his sword,
Alone attended on his lord;
The rest their way through thickets break,
And soon await him by the lake.
It was a fair and gallant sight,
To view them from the neighbouring height,
By the low-levell'd sunbeam's light!
For strength and stature, from the clan
Each warrior was a chosen man,
As even afar might well be seen,
By their proud step and martial mien.
Their feathers dance, their tartans float,

660

670

680

Their targets gleam, as by the boat
A wild and warlike group they stand,
That well became such mountain-strand.

XXVIII.

Their chief, with step reluctant, still
Was lingering on the craggy hill,
Hard by where turn'd apart the road
To Douglas's obscure abode.

690

It was but with that dawning morn
That Roderick Dhu had proudly sworn
To drown his love in war's wild roar,
Nor think of Ellen Douglas more;
But he who stems a stream with sand,
And fetters flame with flaxen band,
Has yet a harder task to prove—
By firm resolve to conquer love!

Eve finds the chief, like restless ghost,
Still hovering near his treasure lost;
For though his haughty heart deny
A parting meeting to his eye,
Still fondly strains his anxious ear,
The accents of her voice to hear,
And inly did he curse the breeze
That waked to sound the rustling trees.
But hark! what mingles in the strain?

700

It is the harp of Allan-bane,
That wakes its measure slow and high,
Attuned to sacred minstrelsy.
What melting voice attends the strings?
'Tis Ellen, or an angel, sings.

710

XXIX.

HYMN TO THE VIRGIN.

Ave Maria! maiden mild!

Listen to a maiden's prayer!

Thou canst hear though from the wild,

Thou canst save amid despair.

Safe may we sleep beneath thy care,

Though banish'd, outcast, and reviled—

Maiden! hear a maiden's prayer;

Mother, hear a suppliant child!

Ave Maria!

720

Ave Maria! undefiled!

The flinty couch we now must share

Shall seem with down of eider piled,

If thy protection hover there.

The murky cavern's heavy air

Shall breathe of balm if thou hast smiled;

Then, Maiden! hear a maiden's prayer;

Mother, list a suppliant child!

Ave Maria!

Ave Maria! stainless styled!

Foul demons of the earth and air,

From this their wonted haunt exiled,

Shall flee before thy presence fair.

We bow us to our lot of care,

Beneath thy guidance reconciled;

Hear for a maid a maiden's prayer,

And for a father hear a child!

Ave Maria!

730

XXX.

Died on the harp the closing hymn—
 Unmoved in attitude and limb,
 As list'ning still, Clan-Alpine's lord
 Stood leaning on his heavy sword, 740
 Until the page, with humble sign,
 Twice pointed to the sun's decline.
 Then while his plaid he round him cast,
 "It is the last time—'tis the last,"
 He muttered thrice,—“the last time e'er
 That angel voice shall Roderick hear!”
 It was a goading thought—his stride
 Hied hastier down the mountain side;
 Sullen he flung him in the boat,
 And instant 'cross the lake it shot. 750
 They landed in that silvery bay,
 And eastward held their hasty way,
 Till, with the latest beams of light,
 The band arrived on Lanrick height,
 Where muster'd, in the vale below,
 Clan-Alpine's men in martial show.

XXXI.

A various scene the clansmen made,
 Some sate, some stood, some slowly stray'd;
 But most with mantles folded round,
 Were couch'd to rest upon the ground, 760
 Scarce to be known by curious eye,
 From the deep heather where they lie,
 So well was match'd the tartan screen
 With heath-bell dark and brackens green,
 Unless where, here and there, a blade,
 Or lance's point, a glimmer made,
 Like glow-worm twinkling through the shade.
 But when, advancing through the gloom,

They saw the chieftain's eagle plume,
Their shout of welcome, shrill and wide,
Shook the steep mountain's steady side.
Thrice it arose, and lake and fell
Three times return'd the martial yell;
It died upon Bochastle's plain,
And Silence claim'd her evening reign.

CANTO FOURTH.

THE PROPHECY.

I.

"THE rose is fairest when 'tis budding new,
And hope is brightest when it dawns from fears;
The rose is sweetest wash'd with morning dew,
And love is loveliest when embalm'd in tears.
O wilding rose, whom fancy thus endears,
I bid your blossoms in my bonnet wave,
Emblem of hope and love through future years!"—
Thus spoke young Norman, heir of Armandave,
What time the sun arose on Vennachar's broad wave.

II.

Such fond conceit, half said, half sung, 10
Love prompted to the bridegroom's tongue.
All while he stripp'd the wild-rose spray,
His axe and bow beside him lay,
For on a pass 'twixt lake and wood,
A wakeful sentinel he stood.
Hark!—on the rock a footstep rung,
And instant to his arms he sprung.
"Stand, or thou diest!—What, Malise?—soon
Art thou return'd from Braes of Doune.
By thy keen step and glance I know, 20
Thou bring'st us tidings of the foe." —
(For while the Fiery Cross hied on,
On distant scout had Malise gone.)
"Where sleeps the chief?" the henchman said.

“Apart, in yonder misty glade;
To his lone couch I’ll be your guide.”—
Then call’d a slumberer by his side,
And stirr’d him with his slacken’d bow—
“Up, up, Glentarkin! rouse thee, ho!
We seek the chieftain; on the track,
Keep eagle watch till I come back.”

III.

Together up the pass they sped:
“What of the foeman?” Norman said.—
“Varying reports from near and far;
This certain,—that a band of war
Has for two days been ready boune,
At prompt command, to march from Doune;
King James, the while, with princely powers,
Holds revelry in Stirling towers.
Soon will this dark and gathering cloud
Speak on our glens in thunder loud.
Inured to bide such bitter bout,
The warrior’s plaid may bear it out;
But, Norman, how wilt thou provide
A shelter for thy bonny bride?”—
“What! know ye not that Roderick’s care
To the lone isle hath caused repair
Each maid and matron of the clan,
And every child and aged man
Unfit for arms: and given his charge,
Nor skiff nor shallop, boat nor barge,
Upon these lakes shall float at large,
But all beside the islet moor,
That such dear pledge may rest secure?”—

IV.

“’Tis well advised—the chieftain’s plan
Bespeaks the father of his clan.

But wherefore sleeps Sir Roderick Dhu
Apart from all his followers true?"—
"It is, because last evening-tide
Brian an augury hath tried,
Of that dread kind which must not be
Unless in dread extremity,
The Taghairm call'd; by which, afar,
Our sires foresaw the events of war.
Duncraggan's milk-white bull they slew."

MALISE.

"Ah! Well the gallant brute I knew!
The choicest of the prey we had,
When swept our merry-men Gallangad.
His hide was snow, his horns were dark,
His red eye glow'd like fiery spark;
So fierce, so tameless, and so fleet,
Sore did he cumber our retreat,
And kept our stoutest kerns in awe,
Even at the pass of Beal'maha.
But steep and flinty was the road,
And sharp the hurrying pikeman's goad,
And when we came to Dennan's Row,
A child might scatheless stroke his brow."—

70

V.

NORMAN.

"That bull was slain: his reeking hide
They stretch'd the cataract beside,
Whose waters their wild tumult toss
Adown the black and craggy boss
Of that huge cliff, whose ample verge
Tradition calls the Hero's Targe.
Couch'd on a shelf beneath its brink,

Close where the thundering torrents sink,
Rocking beneath their headlong sway,
And drizzled by the ceaseless spray,
Midst groan of rock, and roar of stream,
The wizard waits prophetic dream.
Nor distant rests the chief;—but hush!
See, gliding slow through mist and bush,
The hermit gains yon rock, and stands
To gaze upon our slumbering bands.
Seems he not, Malise, like a ghost,
That hovers o'er a slaughter'd host?
Or raven on the blasted oak,
That, watching while the deer is broke,
His morsel claims with sullen croak?"

MALISE.

—"Peace! peace! to other than to me,
Thy words were evil augury;
But still I hold Sir Roderick's blade
Clan-Alpine's omen and her aid,
Not aught that, glean'd from heaven or hell,
Yon fiend-begotten monk can tell.
The chieftain joins him, see—and now,
Together they descend the brow."

VI.

And, as they came, with Alpine's lord
The hermit monk held solemn word:—
"Roderick! it is a fearful strife,
For man endow'd with mortal life,
Whose shroud of sentient clay can still
Feel feverish pang and fainting chill,
Whose eye can stare in stony trance,
Whose hair can rouse like warrior's lance,—
'Tis hard for such to view, unfurl'd,

The curtain of the future world.
 Yet, witness every quaking limb,
 My sunken pulse, my eyeballs dim,
 My soul with harrowing anguish torn,— 120
 This for my chieftain have I borne!—
 The shapes that sought my fearful couch,
 A human tongue may ne'er avouch;
 No mortal man,—save he, who, bred
 Between the living and the dead,
 Is gifted beyond nature's law,—
 Had e'er survived to say he saw.
 At length the fatal answer came,
 In characters of living flame!
 Not spoke in word, nor blazed in scroll, 130
 But borne and branded on my soul;—
 WHICH SPILLS THE FOREMOST FOEMAN'S LIFE,
 THAT PARTY CONQUERS IN THE STRIFE."—

VII.

"Thanks, Brian, for thy zeal and care!
 Good is thine augury, and fair.
 Clan-Alpine ne'er in battle stood,
 But first our broadswords tasted blood.
 A surer victim still I know,
 Self-offer'd to the auspicious blow:
 A spy has sought my land this morn,— 140
 No eve shall witness his return!
 My followers guard each pass's mouth,
 To east, to westward, and to south;
 Red Murdoch, bribed to be his guide,
 Has charge to lead his steps aside,
 Till, in deep path or dingle brown,
 He light on those shall bring him down.
 —But see, who comes his news to show!
 Malise! what tidings of the foe?"—

VIII.

“ At Doune, o’er many a spear and glaive 15
 Two barons proud their banners wave.
 I saw the Moray’s silver star,
 And mark’d the sable pale of Mar.”—
 “ By Alpine’s soul, high tidings those!
 I love to hear of worthy foes.
 When move they on? ”—“ To-morrow’s noon
 Will see them here for battle bounce.”—
 “ Then shall it see a meeting stern!—
 But, for the place—say, couldst thou learn 16
 Nought of the friendly clans of Earn?
 Strengthen’d by them, we well might bide
 The battle on Benledi’s side.
 Thou couldst not?—well! Clan-Alpine’s men
 Shall man the Trosachs’ shaggy glen;
 Within Loch Katrine’s gorge we’ll fight,
 All in our maids’ and matrons’ sight,
 Each for his hearth and household fire,
 Father for child, and son for sire,—
 Lover for maid beloved!—But why—
 Is it the breeze affects mine eye? 17
 Or dost thou come, ill-omen’d tear!
 A messenger of doubt and fear?
 No! sooner may the Saxon lance
 Unfix Benledi from his stance,
 Than doubt or terror can pierce through
 The unyielding heart of Roderick Dhu!
 ’Tis stubborn as his trusty targe.—
 Each to his post—all know their charge.”
 The pibroch sounds, the bands advance,
 The broadswords gleam, the banners dance, 18
 Obedient to the chieftain’s glance.
 —I turn me from the martial roar,
 And seek Coir-Uriskin once more.

IX.

Where is the Douglas?—he is gone;
And Ellen sits on the grey stone
Fast by the cave, and makes her moan;
While vainly Allan's words of cheer
Are pour'd on her unheeding ear.—
“He will return—Dear lady, trust!—
With joy return;—he will—he must. 190
Well was it time to seek, afar,
Some refuge from impending war,
When e'en Clan-Alpine's rugged swarm
Are cow'd by the approaching storm.
I saw their boats with many a light,
Floating the live-long yesternight,
Shifting like flashes darted forth
By the red streamers of the north;
I mark'd at morn how close they ride,
Thick moor'd by the lone islet's side, 200
Like wild-ducks couching in the fen,
When stoops the hawk upon the glen.
Since this rude race dare not abide
The peril on the mainland side,
Shall not thy noble father's care
Some safe retreat for thee prepare?”—

X.

ELLEN.

“No, Allan, no! Pretext so kind
My wakeful terrors could not blind.
When in such tender tone, yet grave,
Douglas a parting blessing gave, 210
The tear that glisten'd in his eye
Drown'd not his purpose fix'd and high.
My soul, though feminine and weak,

Can image his; e'en as the lake,
 Itself disturb'd by slightest stroke,
 Reflects the invulnerable rock.
 He hears report of battle rife,
 He deems himself the cause of strife.
 I saw him redden, when the theme
 Turn'd, Allan, on thine idle dream 220
 Of Malcolm Græme in fetters bound,
 Which I, thou saidst, about him wound.
 Think'st thou he trow'd thine omen aught?
 Oh no! 'twas apprehensive thought
 For the kind youth,—for Roderick too—
 (Let me be just) that friend so true;
 In danger both, and in our cause!
 Minstrel, the Douglas dare not pause.
 Why else that solemn warning given,
 'If not on earth, we meet in heaven!' 230
 Why else, to Cambus-kenneth's fane,
 If eve return him not again,
 Am I to hie, and make me known?
 Alas! he goes to Scotland's throne,
 Buys his friend's safety with his own;—
 He goes to do—what I had done,
 Had Douglas' daughter been his son!"—

XI.

"Nay, lovely Ellen!—dearest, nay!
 If aught should his return delay,
 He only named yon holy fane 240
 As fitting place to meet again.
 Be sure he's safe; and for the Græme,—
 Heaven's blessing on his gallant name!—
 My vision'd sight may yet prove true,
 Nor bode of ill to him or you.
 When did my gifted dream beguile?
 Think of the stranger at the isle,

And think upon the harpings slow,
That presaged this approaching woe!
Sooth was my prophecy of fear; 250
Believe it when it augurs cheer.
Would we had left this dismal spot!
Ill luck still haunts a fairy grot.
Of such a wondrous tale I know—
Dear lady, change that look of woe,
My harp was wont thy grief to cheer.”

ELLEN.

“ Well, be it as thou wilt; I hear,
But cannot stop the bursting tear.”
The minstrel tried his simple art,
But distant far was Ellen’s heart. 260

XII.

BALLAD—ALICE BRAND.

Merry it is in the good greenwood,
When the mavis and merle are singing,
When the deer sweeps by, and the hounds are in cry,
And the hunter’s horn is ringing.

“ O Alice Brand, my native land
Is lost for love of you;
And we must hold by wood and wold,
As outlaws wont to do.

“ O Alice, ’twas all for thy locks so bright,
And ’twas all for thine eyes so blue, 270
That on the night of our luckless flight,
Thy brother bold I slew.

“Now must I teach to hew the beech
 The hand that held the glaive,
 For leaves to spread our lowly bed,
 And stakes to fence our cave.

“And for vest of pall, thy fingers small,
 That wont on harp to stray,
 A cloak must shear from the slaughter’d deer,
 To keep the cold away.”—

280

“O Richard! if my brother died,
 ’Twas but a fatal chance;
 For darkling was the battle tried,
 And fortune sped the lance.

“If pall and vair no more I wear,
 Nor thou the crimson sheen,
 As warm, we’ll say, is the russet grey,
 As gay the forest-green.

“And, Richard, if our lot be hard,
 And lost thy native land,
 Still Alice has her own Richard,
 And he his Alice Brand.”

290

XIII.

BALLAD—(*Continued*).

’Tis merry, ’tis merry, in good greenwood,
 So blithe Lady Alice is singing;
 On the beech’s pride, and oak’s brown side,
 Lord Richard’s axe is ringing.

Up spoke the moody Elfin King,
 Who wonn’d within the hill,—
 Like wind in the porch of a ruin’d church,
 His voice was ghostly shrill.

300

“Why sounds yon stroke on beech and oak,
Our moonlight circle’s screen?
Or who comes here to chase the deer,
Beloved of our Elfin Queen?
Or who may dare on wold to wear
The fairies’ fatal green?”

“Up, Urgan, up! to yon mortal hie,
For thou wert christen’d man;
For cross or sign thou wilt not fly,
For mutter’d word or ban. 310

“Lay on him the curse of the wither’d heart,
The curse of the sleepless eye;
Till he wish and pray that his life would part,
Nor yet find leave to die.”

XIV.

BALLAD—(*Continued*).

’Tis merry, ’tis merry, in good greenwood,
Though the birds have still’d their singing;
The evening blaze doth Alice raise,
And Richard is fagots bringing.

Up Urgan starts, that hideous dwarf,
Before Lord Richard stands, 320
And, as he cross’d and bless’d himself,
“I fear not sign,” quoth the grisly elf,
“That is made with bloody hands.”

But out then spoke she, Alice Brand,
That woman void of fear,—
“And if there’s blood upon his hand,
’Tis but the blood of deer.”—

Now loud thou liest, thou bold of mood!
It cleaves unto his hand,
The stain of thine own kindly blood,
The blood of Ethert Brand."

330

Then forward stepp'd she, Alice Brand,
And made the holy sign,—
"And if there's blood on Richard's hand,
A spotless hand is mine.

"And I conjure thee, demon elf,
By Him whom demons fear,
To show us whence thou art thyself,
And what thine errand here?"—

XV.

BALLAD—(*Continued*).

"'Tis merry, 'tis merry, in Fairy-land
When fairy birds are singing,
When the court doth ride by their monarch's side,
With bit and bridle ringing:

340

"And gaily shines the Fairy-land—
But all is glistening show,
Like the idle gleam that December's beam
Can dart on ice and snow.

"And fading, like that varied gleam,
Is our inconstant shape,
Who now like knight and lady seem,
And now like dwarf and ape.

350

"It was between the night and day,
When the Fairy King has power,
That I sunk down in a sinful fray,

And, 'twixt life and death, was snatch'd away
To the joyless Elfin bower.

“But wist I of a woman bold,
Who thrice my brow durst sign,
I might regain my mortal mould,
As fair a form as thine.” 360

She cross'd him once—she cross'd him twice—
That lady was so brave;
The fouler grew his goblin hue,
The darker grew the cave.

She cross'd him thrice, that lady bold;
He rose beneath her hand
The fairest knight on Scottish mould,
Her brother, Ethert Brand!

Merry it is in good greenwood,
When the mavis and merle are singing, 370
But merrier were they in Dunfermline grey,
When all the bells were ringing.

XVI.

Just as the minstrel sounds were staid,
A stranger climb'd the steepy glade;
His martial step, his stately mien,
His hunting suit of Lincoln green,
His eagle glance, remembrance claims—
'Tis Snowdoun's knight, 'tis James Fitz-James.
Ellen beheld as in a dream,
Then, starting, scarce suppress'd a scream: 380
“O stranger! in such hour of fear,
What evil hap has brought thee here?”—
“An evil hap how can it be,
That bids me look again on thee?

By promise bound, my former guide
 Met me betimes this morning tide,
 And marshall'd, over bank and bourne,
 The happy path of my return."—
 "The happy path!—what! said he nought
 Of war, of battle to be fought,
 Of guarded pass?"—"No, by my faith!
 Nor saw I aught could augur scathe."—
 "O haste thee, Allan, to the kern,
 —Yonder his tartans I discern;
 Learn thou his purpose, and conjure
 That he will guide the stranger sure!—
 What prompted thee, unhappy man?
 The meanest serf in Roderick's clan
 Had not been bribed by love or fear,
 Unknown to him to guide thee here."—

390

400

XVII.

"Sweet Ellen, dear my life must be
 Since it is worthy care from thee;
 Yet life I hold but idle breath,
 When love or honour's weigh'd with death.
 Then let me profit by my chance,
 And speak my purpose bold at once.
 I come to bear thee from a wild,
 Where ne'er before such blossom smiled;
 By this soft hand to lead thee far
 From frantic scenes of feud and war.
 Near Bochastle my horses wait;
 They bear us soon to Stirling gate.
 I'll place thee in a lovely bower,
 I'll guard thee like a tender flower"—
 "O! hush, Sir Knight! 'twere female art,
 To say I do not read thy heart;
 Too much, before, my selfish ear
 Was idly soothed my praise to hear.

410

That fatal bait hath lured thee back,
In deathful hour, o'er dangerous track; 420
And how, O how, can I atone
The wreck my vanity brought on!—
One way remains—I'll tell him all—
Yes! struggling bosom, forth it shall!
Thou, whose light folly bears the blame,
Buy thine own pardon with thy shame!
But first—my father is a man
Outlaw'd and exiled, under ban;
The price of blood is on his head,
With me 'twere infamy to wed.— 430
Still wouldst thou speak?—then hear the truth!
Fitz-James, there is a noble youth,—
If yet he is!—exposed for me
And mine to dread extremity—
Thou hast the secret of my heart;
Forgive, be generous, and depart!”

XVIII.

Fitz-James knew every wily train
A lady's fickle heart to gain,
But here he knew and felt them vain.
There shot no glance from Ellen's eye, 440
To give her steadfast speech the lie;
In maiden confidence she stood,
Though mantled in her cheek the blood,
And told her love with such a sigh
Of deep and hopeless agony,
As death had seal'd her Malcolm's doom,
And she sat sorrowing on his tomb.
Hope vanish'd from Fitz-James's eye,
But not with hope fled sympathy.
He proffer'd to attend her side, 450
As brother would a sister guide.—
“O! little know'st thou Roderick's heart!

Safer for both we go apart.
 O haste thee, and from Allan learn,
 If thou may'st trust yon wily kern."
 With hand upon his forehead laid,
 The conflict of his mind to shade,
 A parting step or two he made;
 Then, as some thought had cross'd his brain,
 He paused, and turn'd, and came again.

460

XIX.

"Hear, lady, yet, a parting word!—
 It chanced in fight that my poor sword
 Preserved the life of Scotland's lord.
 This ring the grateful monarch gave,
 And bade, when I had boon to crave,
 To bring it back, and boldly claim
 The recompense that I would name.
 Ellen, I am no courtly lord,
 But one who lives by lance and sword,
 Whose castle is his helm and shield,
 His lordship the embattled field.
 What from a prince can I demand,
 Who neither reck of state nor land?
 Ellen, thy hand—the ring is thine;
 Each guard and usher knows the sign.
 Seek thou the king without delay;
 This signet shall secure thy way;
 And claim thy suit, whate'er it be,
 As ransom of his pledge to me."
 He placed the golden circlet on,
 Paused—kiss'd her hand—and then was gone.
 The aged minstrel stood aghast,
 So hastily Fitz-James shot past.
 He join'd his guide, and wending down
 The ridges of the mountain brown,
 Across the stream they took their way,
 That joins Loch Katrine to Achray.

470

480

XX.

All in the Trosachs' glen was still,
Noontide was sleeping on the hill:
Sudden his guide whoop'd loud and high— 490
“Murdoch! was that a signal cry?”—
He stammer'd forth—“I shout to scare
Yon raven from his dainty fare.”
He look'd—he knew the raven's prey,
His own brave steed:—“Ah! gallant grey!
For thee—for me, perchance—'twere well
We ne'er had seen the Trosachs' dell.—
Murdoch, move first—but silently;
Whistle or whoop, and thou shalt die!”
Jealous and sullen on they fared, 500
Each silent, each upon his guard.

XXI.

Now wound the path its dizzy ledge
Around a precipice's edge,
When lo! a wasted female form,
Blighted by wrath of sun and storm,
In tatter'd weeds and wild array,
Stood on a cliff beside the way,
And glancing round her restless eye,
Upon the wood, the rock, the sky,
Seem'd nought to mark, yet all to spy. 510
Her brow was wreath'd with gaudy broom;
With gesture wild she waved a plume
Of feathers, which the eagles fling
To crag and cliff from dusky wing;
Such spoils her desperate step had sought,
Where scarce was footing for the goat.
The tartan plaid she first descried,
And shriek'd till all the rocks replied:
As loud she laugh'd when near they drew,

For then the Lowland garb she knew;
 And then her hands she wildly wrung,
 And then she wept, and then she sung—
 She sung!—the voice, in better time,
 Perchance to harp or lute might chime;
 And now, though strain'd and roughen'd, still
 Rung wildly sweet to dale and hill.

520

XXII.

SONG.

They bid me sleep, they bid me pray,
 They say my brain is warp'd and wrung—
 I cannot sleep on Highland brae,
 I cannot pray in Highland tongue.
 But were I now where Allan glides,
 Or heard my native Devan's tides,
 So sweetly would I rest, and pray
 That Heaven would close my wintry day!

530

'Twas thus my hair they bade me braid,
 They made me to the church repair;
 It was my bridal morn they said,
 And my true love would meet me there.
 But woe betide the cruel guile,
 That drown'd in blood the morning smile!
 And woe betide the fairy dream!
 I only waked to sob and scream.

540

XXIII.

"Who is this maid? what means her lay?
 She hovers o'er the hollow way,
 And flutters wide her mantle grey,
 As the lone heron spreads his wing,
 By twilight, o'er a haunted spring."

" 'Tis Blanche of Devan," Murdoch said,
 " A crazed and captive Lowland maid,
 Ta'en on the morn she was a bride, 550
 When Roderick foray'd Devan-side.
 The gay bridegroom resistance made,
 And felt our chief's unconquer'd blade.
 I marvel she is now at large,
 But oft she 'scapes from Maudlin's charge.—
 Hence, brain-sick fool!"—He raised his bow:—
 " Now, if thou strik'st her but one blow,
 I'll pitch thee from the cliff as far
 As ever peasant pitch'd a bar!"—
 "Thanks, champion, thanks!" the maniac cried, 560
 And press'd her to Fitz-James's side.
 " See the grey pennons I prepare,
 To seek my true-love through the air!
 I will not lend that savage groom,
 To break his fall, one downy plume!
 No!—deep amid disjointed stones,
 The wolves shall batten on his bones,
 And then shall his detested plaid,
 By bush and brier in mid air staid,
 Wave forth a banner fair and free, 570
 Meet signal for their revelry."—

XXIV.

" Hush thee, poor maiden, and be still!"—
 " O! thou look'st kindly, and I will,—
 Mine eye has dried and wasted been,
 But still it loves the Lincoln green;
 And, though mine ear is all unstrung,
 Still, still it loves the Lowland tongue.

' For O my sweet William was forester true,
 He stole poor Blanche's heart away!
 His coat it was all of the greenwood hue, 580
 And so blithely he trill'd the Lowland lay!

“It was not that I meant to tell . . .
But thou art wise and guessest well.”
Then, in a low and broken tone,
And hurried note, the song went on.
Still on the clansman, fearfully,
She fix’d her apprehensive eye;
Then turn’d it on the knight, and then
Her look glanced wildly o’er the glen.

XXV.

“The toils are pitch’d, and the stakes are set, 590
Ever sing merrily, merrily;
The bows they bend, and the knives they whet,
Hunters live so cheerily.

“It was a stag, a stag of ten,
Bearing its branches sturdily;
He came stately down the glen,
Ever sing hardily, hardily.

“It was there he met with a wounded doe,
She was bleeding deathfully;
She warn’d him of the toils below, 600
O, so faithfully, faithfully!

“He had an eye, and he could heed,
Ever sing warily, warily;
He had a foot, and he could speed—
Hunters watch so narrowly.”

XXVI.

Fitz-James’s mind was passion-toss’d,
When Ellen’s hints and fears were lost;
But Murdoch’s shout suspicion wrought,
And Blanche’s song conviction brought.—

Not like a stag that spies the snare, 610
But lion of the hunt aware,
He waved at once his blade on high,
“Disclose thy treachery, or die!”
Forth at full speed the clansman flew,
But in his race his bow he drew.
The shaft just grazed Fitz-James’s crest,
And thrilled in Blanche’s faded breast.—
Murdoch of Alpine! prove thy speed,
For ne’er had Alpine’s son such need!
With heart of fire, and foot of wind, 620
The fierce avenger is behind!
Fate judges of the rapid strife—
The forfeit death—the prize is life!
Thy kindred ambush lies before,
Close couch’d upon the heathery moor;
Them couldst thou reach!—it may not be—
Thine ambush’d kin thou ne’er shalt see,
The fiery Saxon gains on thee!
—Resistless speeds the deadly thrust,
As lightning strikes the pine to dust; 630
With foot and hand Fitz-James must strain,
Ere he can win his blade again.
Bent o’er the fall’n, with falcon eye,
He grimly smiled to see him die;
Then slower wended back his way,
Where the poor maiden bleeding lay.

XXVII.

She sate beneath a birchen-tree,
Her elbow resting on her knee;
She had withdrawn the fatal shaft,
And gazed on it, and feebly laugh’d; 340
Her wreath of broom and feathers grey,
Daggled with blood, beside her lay.
The knight to staunch the life-stream tried,—

"Stranger, it is in vain!" she cried.
 "This hour of death has given me more
 Of reason's power than years before;
 For, as these ebbing veins decay,
 My frenzied visions fade away.
 A helpless injured wretch I die,
 And something tells me in thine eye,
 That thou wert mine avenger born.—
 Seest thou this tress?—O! still I've worn
 This little tress of yellow hair,
 Through danger, frenzy, and despair!
 It once was bright and clear as thine,
 But blood and tears have dimm'd its shine.
 I will not tell thee when 'twas shred,
 Nor from what guiltless victim's head—
 My brain would turn!—but it shall wave
 Like plumage on thy helmet brave,
 Till sun and wind shall bleach the stain,
 And thou wilt bring it me again.—
 I waver still.—O God! more bright
 Let reason beam her parting light!—
 O! by thy knighthood's honour'd sign,
 And for thy life preserved by mine,
 When thou shalt see a darksome man,
 Who boasts him chief of Alpine's Clan,
 With tartans broad and shadowy plume
 And hand of blood, and brow of gloom,
 Be thy heart bold, thy weapon strong,
 And wreak poor Blanche of Devan's wrong!—
 They watch for thee by pass and fell . . .
 Avoid the path . . . O God! . . . farewell."

650

660

670

XXVIII.

A kindly heart had brave Fitz-James;
 Fast pour'd his eyes at pity's claims,
 And now, with mingled grief and ire,

He saw the murder'd maid expire.

“God, in my need, be my relief,

As I wreak this on yonder chief!”

680

A lock from Blanche's tresses fair

He blended with her bridegroom's hair;

The mingled braid in blood he dyed,

And placed it on his bonnet-side:

“By Him whose word is truth! I swear,

No other favour will I wear,

Till this sad token I imbrue

In the best blood of Roderick Dhu!

—But hark! what means yon faint halloo?

The chase is up,—but they shall know,

690

The stag at bay 's a dangerous foe.”

Barr'd from the known but guarded way,

Through copse and cliffs Fitz-James must stray,

And oft must change his desperate track,

By stream and precipice turn'd back.

Heartless, fatigued, and faint, at length,

From lack of food and loss of strength,

He couch'd him in a thicket hoar,

And thought his toils and perils o'er:—

“Of all my rash adventures past,

700

This frantic feat must prove the last!

Who e'er so mad but might have guess'd,

That all this Highland hornet's nest

Would muster up in swarms so soon

As e'er they heard of bands at Doune?—

Like bloodhounds now they search me out,—

Hark, to the whistle and the shout!—

If further through the wilds I go,

I only fall upon the foe:

I'll couch me here till evening grey,

710

Then darkling try my dangerous way.”

XXIX.

The shades of eve come slowly down,
 The woods are wrapped in deeper brown,
 The owl awakens from her dell,
 The fox is heard upon the fell;
 Enough remains of glimmering light
 To guide the wanderer's steps aright,
 Yet not enough from far to show
 His figure to the watchful foe.
 With cautious step, and ear awake,
 He climbs the crag and threads the brake;
 And not the summer solstice, there,
 Tempered the midnight mountain air,
 But every breeze that swept the wold
 Benumb'd his drenched limbs with cold.
 In dread, in danger, and alone,
 Famish'd and chill'd, through ways unknown,
 Tangled and steep, he journey'd on;
 Till, as a rock's huge point he turn'd,
 A watch-fire close before him burn'd.

720

730

XXX.

Beside its embers red and clear,
 Bask'd, in his plaid, a mountaineer;
 And up he sprung with sword in hand,—
 “Thy name and purpose! Saxon, stand!”
 “A stranger.” “What dost thou require?”—
 “Rest and a guide, and food and fire.
 My life's beset, my path is lost,
 The gale has chill'd my limbs with frost.”—
 “Art thou a friend to Roderick?” “No.”
 “Thou dardest not call thyself a foe?”
 “I dare! to him and all the band
 He brings to aid his murderous hand.”—
 “Bold words!—but, though the beast of game

740

The privilege of chase may claim,
Though space and law the stag we lend,
Ere hound we slip, or bow we bend,
Who ever reck'd, where, how, or when,
The prowling fox was trapp'd or slain?
Thus treacherous scouts,—yet sure they lie,
Who say thou camest a secret spy!"— 750
"They do, by heaven!—Come Roderick Dhu,
And of his clan the boldest two,
And let me but till morning rest,
I write the falsehood on their crest."
"If by the blaze I mark aright,
Thou bear'st the belt and spur of knight."
"Then by these tokens may'st thou know
Each proud oppressor's mortal foe."—
"Enough, enough; sit down and share
A soldier's couch, a soldier's fare." 760

XXXI.

He gave him of his Highland cheer,
The harden'd flesh of mountain deer;
Dry fuel on the fire he laid,
And bade the Saxon share his plaid.
He tended him like welcome guest,
Then thus his further speech address'd:—
"Stranger, I am to Roderick Dhu
A clansman born, a kinsman true;
Each word against his honour spoke,
Demands of me avenging stroke; 770
Yet more,—upon thy fate, 'tis said,
A mighty augury is laid.
It rests with me to wind my horn,—
Thou art with numbers overborne;
It rests with me, here, brand to brand,
Worn as thou art, to bid thee stand:
But, not for clan, nor kindred's cause,

Will I depart from honour's laws;
To assail a wearied man were shame,
And stranger is a holy name;
Guidance and rest, and food and fire,
In vain he never must require.
Then rest thee here till dawn of day;
Myself will guide thee on the way,
O'er stock and stone, through watch and ward,
Till past Clan-Alpine's outmost guard,
As far as Coilantogle's ford;
From thence thy warrant is thy sword."
"I take thy courtesy, by heaven,
As freely as 'tis nobly given!"
"Well, rest thee; for the bittern's cry
Sings us the lake's wild lullaby."
With that he shook the gather'd heath,
And spread his plaid upon the wreath;
And the brave foemen, side by side,
Lay peaceful down like brothers tried,
And slept until the dawning beam
Purpled the mountain and the stream.

780

790

CANTO FIFTH.

THE COMBAT.

I.

FAIR as the earliest beam of eastern light,
When first, by the bewilder'd pilgrim spied,
It smiles upon the dreary brow of night,
And silvers o'er the torrent's foaming tide,
And lights the fearful path on mountain side;—
Fair as that beam, although the fairest far,
Giving to horror grace, to danger pride,
Shine martial Faith, and Courtesy's bright star,
Through all the wreckful storms that cloud the brow of
War.

II.

That early beam, so fair and sheen, 10
Was twinkling through the hazel screen,
When, rousing at its glimmer red,
The warriors left their lowly bed,
Look'd out upon the dappled sky,
Mutter'd their soldier matins by,
And then awaked their fire, to steal,
As short and rude, their soldier meal.
That o'er, the Gael around him threw
His graceful plaid of varied hue,
And, true to promise, led the way, 20
By thicket green and mountain grey.
A wildering path!—they winded now
Along the precipice's brow,
Commanding the rich scenes beneath,

The windings of the Forth and Teith,
And all the vales between that lie,
Till Stirling's turrets melt in sky;
Then, sunk in copse, their farthest glance
Gain'd not the length of horseman's lance.
'Twas oft so steep, the foot was fain
Assistance from the hand to gain;
So tangled oft, that, bursting through,
Each hawthorn shed her showers of dew,—
That diamond dew, so pure and clear,
It rivals all but Beauty's tear!

30

III.

At length they came where, stern and steep,
The hill sinks down upon the deep.
Here Vennachar in silver flows,
There, ridge on ridge, Benledi rose;
Ever the hollow path twined on,
Beneath steep bank and threatening stone;
An hundred men might hold the post
With hardihood against a host.
The rugged mountain's scanty cloak
Was dwarfish shrubs of birch and oak,
With shingles bare, and cliffs between,
And patches bright of bracken green,
And heather black, that waved so high,
It held the copse in rivalry.
But where the lake slept deep and still,
Dank osiers fringed the swamp and hill;
And oft both path and hill were torn,
Where wintry torrent down had borne,
And heap'd upon the cumber'd land
Its wreck of gravel, rocks, and sand.
So toilsome was the road to trace,
The guide, abating of his pace,
Led slowly through the pass's jaws,

40

50

And ask'd Fitz-James, by what strange cause
He sought these wilds, traversed by few, 60
Without a pass from Roderick Dhu.

IV.

“ Brave Gael, my pass, in danger tried,
Hangs in my belt, and by my side;
Yet, sooth to tell,” the Saxon said,
“ I dreamt not now to claim its aid.
When here, but three days since, I came,
Bewilder'd in pursuit of game,
All seem'd as peaceful and as still,
As the mist slumbering on yon hill;
Thy dangerous chief was then afar, 70
Nor soon expected back from war.
Thus said, at least, my mountain-guide,
Though deep perchance the villain lied.”—
“ Yet why a second venture try? ”—
“ A warrior thou, and ask me why!—
Moves our free course by such fix'd cause,
As gives the poor mechanic laws?
Enough, I sought to drive away
The lazy hours of peaceful day;
Slight cause will then suffice to guide 80
A knight's free footsteps far and wide,—
A falcon flown, a greyhound stray'd,
The merry glance of mountain maid:
Or, if a path be dangerous known,
The danger's self is lure alone.”—

V.

“ Thy secret keep, I urge thee not;—
Yet, ere again ye sought this spot,
Say, heard ye nought of Lowland war,
Against Clan-Alpine, raised by Mar? ”

—“ No, by my word;—of bands prepared 90
To guard King James’s sports I heard;
Nor doubt I aught, but, when they hear
This muster of the mountaineer,
Their pennons will abroad be flung,
Which else in Doune had peaceful hung.”—
“ Free be they flung!—for we were loth
Their silken folds should feast the moth.
Free be they flung!—as free shall wave
Clan-Alpine’s pine in banner brave.
But, stranger, peaceful since you came, 100
Bewilder’d in the mountain game,
Whence the bold boast by which you show
Vich-Alpine’s vow’d and mortal foe? ”—
“ Warrior, but yester-morn, I knew
Nought of thy chieftain, Roderick Dhu,
Save as an outlaw’d desperate man,
The chief of a rebellious clan,
Who, in the Regent’s court and sight,
With ruffian dagger stabb’d a knight:
Yet this alone might from his part 110
Sever each true and loyal heart.”

VI.

Wrothful at such arraignment foul,
Dark lower’d the clansman’s sable scowl.
A space he paused, then sternly said,
“ And heard’st thou why he drew his blade?
Heard’st thou that shameful word and blow
Brought Roderick’s vengeance on his foe?
What reck’d the chieftain if he stood
On Highland heath, or Holy-Rood?
He rights such wrong where it is given, 120
If it were in the court of heaven.”—
“ Still was it outrage:—yet, ’tis true,
Not then claim’d sovereignty his due;

While Albany, with feeble hand,
Held borrow'd truncheon of command,
The young king, mew'd in Stirling tower,
Was stranger to respect and power.
But then, thy chieftain's robber life!—
Winning mean prey by causeless strife,
Wrenching from ruin'd Lowland swain
His herds and harvest reared in vain.—
Methinks a soul like thine should scorn
The spoils from such foul foray borne.”

130

VII.

The Gael beheld him grim the while,
And answer'd with disdainful smile,—
“Saxon, from yonder mountain high,
I mark'd thee send delighted eye,
Far to the south and east, where lay,
Extended in succession gay,
Deep waving fields and pastures green,
With gentle slopes and groves between:—
These fertile plains, that soften'd vale,
Were once the birthright of the Gael;
The stranger came with iron hand,
And from our fathers reft the land.
Where dwell we now! See, rudely swell
Crag over crag, and fell o'er fell.
Ask we this savage hill we tread,
For fatten'd steer or household bread;
Ask we for flocks these shingles dry,
And well the mountain might reply,—
‘To you, as to your sires of yore,
Belong the target and claymore!
I give you shelter in my breast,
Your own good blades must win the rest.’
Pent in this fortress of the North,
Think'st thou we will not sally forth,

140

150

To spoil the spoiler as we may,
 And from the robber rend the prey?
 Ay, by my soul!—While on yon plain
 The Saxon rears one shock of grain;
 While, of ten thousand herds, there strays
 But one along yon river's maze,—
 The Gael, of plain and river heir,
 Shall, with strong hand, redeem his share.
 Where live the mountain chiefs who hold
 That plundering Lowland field and fold
 Is aught but retribution true?
 Seek other cause 'gainst Roderick Dhu.”—

VIII.

Answer'd Fitz-James,—“ And, if I sought,
 Think'st thou no other could be brought?
 What deem ye of my path waylaid?
 My life given o'er to ambuscade?”—
 “ As of a meed to rashness due:
 Hadst thou sent warning fair and true,—
 I seek my hound, or falcon stray'd,
 I seek, good faith, a Highland maid,—
 Free hadst thou been to come and go;
 But secret path marks secret foe.
 Nor yet, for this, even as a spy,
 Hadst thou, unheard, been doom'd to die,
 Save to fulfil an augury.”—
 “ Well, let it pass; nor will I now
 Fresh cause of enmity avow,
 To chafe thy mood and cloud thy brow.
 Enough, I am by promise tied
 To match me with this man of pride:
 Twice have I sought Clan-Alpine's glen
 In peace; but when I come agen,
 I come with banner, brand, and bow,
 As leader seeks his mortal foe.

For love-lorn swain, in lady's bower,
Ne'er panted for the appointed hour,
As I, until before me stand
This rebel chieftain and his band ! ”

IX.

“ Have, then, thy wish ! ”—He whistled shrill,
And he was answer'd from the hill ;
Wild as the scream of the curlew,
From crag to crag the signal flew.
Instant, through copse and heath, arose 200
Bonnets and spears and bended bows ;
On right, on left, above, below,
Sprung up at once the lurking foe ;
From shingles grey their lances start,
The bracken bush sends forth the dart,
The rushes and the willow-wand
Are bristling into axe and brand,
And every tuft of broom gives life
To plaided warrior arm'd for strife.
That whistle garrison'd the glen 210
At once with full five hundred men,
As if the yawning hill to heaven
A subterranean host had given.
Watching their leader's beck and will,
All silent there they stood, and still.
Like the loose crags whose threatening mass
Lay tottering o'er the hollow pass,
As if an infant's touch could urge
Their headlong passage down the verge,
With step and weapon forward flung, 220
Upon the mountain-side they hung.
The mountaineer cast glance of pride
Along Benledi's living side,
Then fix'd his eye and sable brow
Full on Fitz-James—“ How say'st thou now ?

These are Clan-Alpine's warriors true;
And, Saxon,—I am Roderick Dhu!"

X.

Fitz-James was brave:—though to his heart
The life-blood thrill'd with sudden start,
He mann'd himself with dauntless air, 23
Return'd the chief his haughty stare,
His back against a rock he bore,
And firmly placed his foot before:—
"Come one, come all! this rock shall fly
From its firm base as soon as I."
Sir Roderick mark'd—and in his eyes
Respect was mingled with surprise,
And the stern joy which warriors feel
In foemen worthy of their steel.
Short space he stood—then waved his hand: 24
Down sunk the disappearing band;
Each warrior vanish'd where he stood,
In broom or bracken, heath or wood;
Sunk brand and spear and bended bow,
In osiers pale and copses low;
It seemed as if their mother Earth
Had swallow'd up her warlike birth.
The wind's last breath had toss'd in air,
Pennon, and plaid, and plumage fair,—
The next but swept a lone hill-side, 25
Where heath and fern were waving wide:
The sun's last glance was glinted back,
From spear and glaive, from targe and jack,—
The next, all unreflected, shone
On bracken green, and cold grey stone.

XI.

Fitz-James look'd round—yet scarce believed
The witness that his sight received;
Such apparition well might seem
Delusion of a dreadful dream.
Sir Roderick in suspense he eyed, 260
And to his look the chief replied,
“Fear naught—nay, that I need not say—
But—doubt not aught from mine array.
Thou art my guest;—I pledged my word
As far as Coilantogle ford:
Nor would I call a clansman's brand
For aid against one valiant hand,
Though on our strife lay every vale
Rent by the Saxon from the Gael.
So move we on;—I only meant 270
To show the reed on which you leant,
Deeming this path you might pursue
Without a pass from Roderick Dhu.”
They moved:—I said Fitz-James was brave,
As ever knight that belted glaive;
Yet dare not say that now his blood
Kept on its wont and temper'd flood,
As, following Roderick's stride, he drew
That seeming lonesome pathway through,
Which yet, by fearful proof, was rife 280
With lances, that, to take his life,
Waited but signal from a guide
So late dishonour'd and defied.
Ever, by stealth, his eye sought round
The vanish'd guardians of the ground,
And still, from copse and heather deep,
Fancy saw spear and broadsword peep,
And in the plover's shrilly strain,
The signal whistle heard again.
Nor breathed he free till far behind 290

The pass was left; for then they wind
Along a wide and level green,
Where neither tree nor tuft was seen,
Nor rush nor bush of broom was near,
To hide a bonnet or a spear.

XII.

The chief in silence strode before,
And reached that torrent's sounding shore,
Which, daughter of three mighty lakes,
From Vennachar in silver breaks,
Sweeps through the plain, and ceaseless mines 30
On Bochastle the mouldering lines,
Where Rome, the Empress of the world,
Of yore her eagle wings unfurl'd.
And here his course the chieftain staid,
Threw down his target and his plaid,
And to the Lowland warrior said—
“Bold Saxon! to his promise just,
Vich-Alpine has discharged his trust.
This murderous chief, this ruthless man,
This head of a rebellious clan, 31
Hath led thee safe, through watch and ward,
Far past Clan-Alpine's outmost guard.
Now, man to man, and steel to steel,
A chieftain's vengeance thou shalt feel.
See, here, all vantageless I stand,
Arm'd, like thyself, with single brand:
For this is Coilantogle ford,
And thou must keep thee with thy sword.”

XIII.

The Saxon paused:—“I ne'er delay'd,
When foeman bade me draw my blade;
Nay more, brave chief, I vow'd thy death: 32

Yet sure thy fair and generous faith,
 And my deep debt for life preserved,
 A better meed have well deserved:
 Can nought but blood our feud atone?
 Are there no means?"—"No, stranger, none!
 And here,—to fire thy flagging zeal,—
 The Saxon cause rests on thy steel;
 For thus spoke Fate, by prophet bred
 Between the living and the dead; 330
 'Who spills the foremost foeman's life,
 His party conquers in the strife.'"
 "Then, by my word," the Saxon said,
 "The riddle is already read.
 Seek yonder brake beneath the cliff,—
 There lies Red Murdoch, stark and stiff.
 Thus Fate has solved her prophecy;
 Then yield to Fate, and not to me.
 To James, at Stirling, let us go,
 When, if thou wilt be still his foe, 340
 Or if the King shall not agree
 To grant thee grace and favour free,
 I plight mine honour, oath, and word,
 That, to thy native strengths restored,
 With each advantage shalt thou stand,
 That aids thee now to guard thy land."

XIV.

Dark lightning flash'd from Roderick's eye—
 "Soars thy presumption, then, so high,
 Because a wretched kern ye slew,
 Homage to name to Roderick Dhu? 350
 He yields not, he, to man nor Fate!
 Thou add'st but fuel to my hate:—
 My clansman's blood demands revenge.
 Not yet prepared?—By heaven, I change
 My thought, and hold thy valour light

As that of some vain carpet knight,
Who ill deserved my courteous care,
And whose best boast is but to wear
A braid of his fair lady's hair."—
"I thank thee, Roderick, for the word!
It nerves my heart, it steels my sword;
For I have sworn this braid to stain
In the best blood that warms thy vein.
Now, truce, farewell! and, ruth, begone!—
Yet think not that by thee alone,
Proud chief! can courtesy be shown;
Though not from copse, or heath, or cairn,
Start at my whistle clansmen stern,
Of this small horn one feeble blast
Would fearful odds against thee cast.
But fear not—doubt not—which thou wilt—
We try this quarrel hilt to hilt."—
Then each at once his falchion drew,
Each on the ground his scabbard threw,
Each look'd to sun, and stream, and plain,
As what they ne'er might see again;
Then foot, and point, and eye opposed,
In dubious strife they darkly closed.

XV.

Ill fared it then with Roderick Dhu,
That on the field his targe he threw,
Whose brazen studs and tough bull-hide
Had death so often dashed aside;
For, train'd abroad his arms to wield,
Fitz-James's blade was sword and shield.
He practised every pass and ward,
To thrust, to strike, to feint, to guard;
While less expert, though stronger far,
The Gael maintain'd unequal war.
Three times in closing strife they stood,

And thrice the Saxon blade drank blood; 390
 No stinted draught, no scanty tide,
 The gushing flood the tartans dyed.
 Fierce Roderick felt the fatal drain,
 And shower'd his blows like wintry rain;
 And, as firm rock, or castle-roof,
 Against the winter shower is proof,
 The foe, invulnerable still,
 Foil'd his wild rage by steady skill;
 Till, at advantage ta'en, his brand
 Forced Roderick's weapon from his hand, 400
 And backward borne upon the lea,
 Brought the proud chieftain to his knee.

XVI.

"Now, yield thee, or by Him who made
 The world, thy heart's blood dyes my blade!"—
 "Thy threats, thy mercy, I defy!
 Let recreant yield, who fears to die."
 —Like adder darting from his coil,
 Like wolf that dashes through the toil,
 Like mountain-cat who guards her young,
 Full at Fitz-James's throat he sprung; 410
 Received, but reck'd not of a wound,
 And lock'd his arms his foeman round.—
 Now, gallant Saxon, hold thine own!
 No maiden's hand is round thee thrown!
 That desperate grasp thy frame might feel,
 Through bars of brass and triple steel!—
 They tug, they strain! down, down they go,
 The Gael above, Fitz-James below.
 The chieftain's gripe his throat compress'd,
 His knee was planted in his breast; 420
 His clotted locks he backward threw,
 Across his brow his hand he drew,
 From blood and mist to clear his sight,

Then gleam'd aloft his dagger bright!—
—But hate and fury ill supplied
The stream of life's exhausted tide,
And all too late the advantage came,
To turn the odds of deadly game;
For, while the dagger gleam'd on high,
Reel'd soul and sense, reel'd brain and eye.
Down came the blow! but in the heath
The erring blade found bloodless sheath.
The struggling foe may now unclasp
The fainting chief's relaxing grasp;
Unwounded from the dreadful close,
But breathless all, Fitz-James arose.

XVII.

He falter'd thanks to Heaven for life,
Redeem'd, unhop'd, from desperate strife;
Next on his foe his look he cast,
Whose every gasp appear'd his last;
In Roderick's gore he dipped the braid,—
“Poor Blanche! thy wrongs are dearly paid:
Yet with thy foe must die, or live,
The praise that faith and valour give.”
With that he blew a bugle-note,
Undid the collar from his throat,
Unbonneted, and by the wave
Sate down his brow and hands to lave.
Then faint afar are heard the feet
Of rushing steeds in gallop fleet;
The sounds increase, and now are seen
Four mounted squires in Lincoln green;
Two who bear lance, and two who lead,
By loosen'd rein, a saddled steed;
Each onward held his headlong course,
And by Fitz-James rein'd up his horse,—
With wonder view'd the bloody spot—

—“ Exclaim not, gallants! question not.—
You, Herbert and Luffness, alight,
And bind the wounds of yonder knight;
Let the grey palfrey bear his weight,
We destined for a fairer freight,
And bring him on to Stirling straight;
I will before at better speed,
To seek fresh horse and fitting weed.
The sun rides high;—I must be boune
To see the archer-game at noon;
But lightly Bayard clears the lea.—
De Vaux and Herries, follow me.

460

XVIII.

“ Stand, Bayard, stand! ”—the steed obey’d,
With arching neck and bended head,
And glancing eye and quivering ear,
As if he loved his lord to hear.
No foot Fitz-James in stirrup staid,
No grasp upon the saddle laid,
But wreath’d his left hand in the mane,
And lightly bounded from the plain,
Turn’d on the horse his armed heel,
And stirr’d his courage with the steel.
Bounded the fiery steed in air,
The rider sate erect and fair,
Then like a bolt from steel crossbow
Forth launch’d, along the plain they go.
They dash’d that rapid torrent through,
And up Carhonie’s hill they flew;
Still at the gallop prick’d the knight,
His merry-men follow’d as they might.
Along thy banks, swift Teith! they ride,
And in the race they mock thy tide;
Torry and Lendrick now are past,
And Deanstown lies behind them cast;

470

480

490

They rise, the banner'd towers of Doune,
 They sink in distant woodland soon;
 Blair-Drummond sees the hoofs strike fire,
 They sweep like breeze through Ochtertyre;
 They mark just glance and disappear
 The lofty brow of ancient Kier;
 They bathe their coursers' sweltering sides,
 Dark Forth! amid thy sluggish tides,
 And on the opposing shore take ground,
 With splash, with scramble, and with bound.
 Right-hand they leave thy cliffs, Craig-Forth!
 And soon the bulwark of the North,
 Grey Stirling, with her towers and town,
 Upon their fleet career look'd down.

500

XIX.

As up the flinty path they strain'd,
 Sudden his steed the leader rein'd;
 A signal to his squire he flung,
 Who instant to his stirrup sprung:—
 “Seest thou, De Vaux, yon woodsman grey,
 Who town-ward holds the rocky way,
 Of stature tall and poor array?
 Mark'st thou the firm, yet active stride,
 With which he scales the mountain-side?
 Know'st thou from whence he comes, or whom?”
 “No, by my word;—a burly groom
 He seems, who in the field or chase
 A baron's train would nobly grace.”—
 “Out, out, De Vaux! can fear supply,
 And jealousy, no sharper eye?
 Afar, ere to the hill he drew,
 That stately form and step I knew;
 Like form in Scotland is not seen,
 Treads not such step on Scottish green.
 'Tis James of Douglas, by Saint Serle!

510

520

The uncle of the banish'd Earl.
Away, away, to court, to show
The near approach of dreaded foe:
The King must stand upon his guard;
Douglas and he must meet prepared." 580
Then right-hand wheel'd their steeds, and straight
They won the castle's postern gate.

XX.

The Douglas, who had bent his way
From Cambus-Kenneth's abbey grey,
Now, as he climb'd the rocky shelf,
Held sad communion with himself:—
"Yes! all is true my fears could frame;
A prisoner lies the noble Græme,
And fiery Roderick soon will feel
The vengeance of the royal steel. 540
I, only I, can ward their fate,—
God grant the ransom come not late!
The Abbess hath her promise given,
My child shall be the bride of heaven;—
—Be pardon'd one repining tear!
For He, who gave her, knows how dear,
How excellent!—but that is by,
And now my business is—to die.
—Ye towers! within whose circuit dread
A Douglas by his sovereign bled; 550
And thou, O sad and fatal mound!
That oft has heard the death-axe sound,
As on the noblest of the land
Fell the stern headsman's bloody hand,—
The dungeon, block, and nameless tomb
Prepare—for Douglas seeks his doom!
—But hark! what blithe and jolly peal
Makes the Franciscan steeple reel?
And see! upon the crowded street,

In motley groups what masquers meet! 560
Banner and pageant, pipe and drum,
And merry morrice-dancers come.
I guess, by all this quaint array,
The burghers hold their sports to-day.
James will be there; he loves such show,
Where the good yeoman bends his bow,
And the tough wrestler foils his foe,
As well as where, in proud career,
The high-born tilter shivers spear.
I'll follow to the Castle-park, 570
And play my prize;—King James shall mark,
If age has tamed these sinews stark,
Whose force so oft, in happier days,
His boyish wonder loved to praise.”

XXI.

The Castle gates were open flung,
The quivering drawbridge rock'd and rung,
And echo'd loud the flinty street
Beneath the coursers' clattering feet,
As slowly down the steep descent
Fair Scotland's King and nobles went, 580
While all along the crowded way
Was jubilee and loud huzza.
And ever James was bending low,
To his white jennet's saddle-bow,
Doffing his cap to city dame,
Who smiled and blush'd for pride and shame.
And well the simperer might be vain,—
He chose the fairest of the train.
Gravely he greets each city sire,
Commends each pageant's quaint attire, 590
Gives to the dancers thanks aloud,
And smiles and nods upon the crowd,
Who rend the heavens with their acclaims,

“ Long live the Commons’ King, King James ! ”

Behind the King throng’d peer and knight,
And noble dame and damsel bright,
Whose fiery steeds ill brook’d the stay
Of the steep street and crowded way.

—But in the train you might discern
Dark lowering brow and visage stern ;
There nobles mourn’d their pride restrain’d,
And the mean burgher’s joys disdain’d ;
And chiefs, who, hostage for their clan,
Were each from home a banish’d man,
There thought upon their own grey tower,
Their waving woods, their feudal power,
And deem’d themselves a shameful part
Of pageant which they cursed in heart.

600

XXII.

Now, in the Castle-park, drew out
Their chequer’d bands the joyous rout.

610

There morricers, with bell at heel,
And blade in hand, their mazes wheel ;
But chief, beside the butts, there stand
Bold Robin Hood and all his band,—
Friar Tuck with quarterstaff and cowl,
Old Scathelocke with his surly scowl,
Maid Marion, fair as ivory bone,
Scarlet, and Mutch, and Little John ;
Their bugles challenge all that will,
In archery to prove their skill.

620

The Douglas bent a bow of might,—
His first shaft centred in the white,
And when in turn he shot again,
His second split the first in twain.
From the King’s hand must Douglas take
A silver dart, the archers’ stake ;
Fondly he watch’d, with watery eye,

Some answering glance of sympathy,—
No kind emotion made reply!
Indifferent as to archer wight,
The monarch gave the arrow bright.

630

XXIII.

Now, clear the ring! for, hand to hand,
The manly wrestlers take their stand.
Two o'er the rest superior rose,
And proud demanded mightier foes,
Nor call'd in vain; for Douglas came.
—For life is Hugh of Larbert lame;
Scarce better John of Alloa's fare,
Whom senseless home his comrades bear.
Prize of the wrestling match, the King
To Douglas gave a golden ring,
While coldly glanced his eye of blue,
As frozen drop of wintry dew.
Douglas would speak, but in his breast
His struggling soul his words suppress'd;
Indignant then he turn'd him where
Their arms the brawny yeomen bare,
To hurl the massive bar in air.
When each his utmost strength had shown,
The Douglas rent an earth-fast stone
From its deep bed, then heav'd it high,
And sent the fragment through the sky,
A rood beyond the farthest mark;—
And still in Stirling's royal park,
The grey-hair'd sires, who know the past,
To strangers point the Douglas-cast,
And moralize on the decay
Of Scottish strength in modern day.

640

650

XXIV.

The vale with loud applauses rang,
 The Ladies' Rock sent back the clang. 660
 The King, with look unmoved, bestow'd
 A purse well-fill'd with pieces broad.
 Indignant smil'd the Douglas proud,
 And threw the gold among the crowd,
 Who now, with anxious wonder, scan,
 And sharper glance, the dark grey man;
 Till whispers rose among the throng,
 That heart so free, and hand so strong,
 Must to the Douglas blood belong,
 The old men mark'd and shook the head, 670
 To see his hair with silver spread,
 And wink'd aside, and told each son
 Of feats upon the English done,
 Ere Douglas of the stalwart hand
 Was exiled from his native land.
 The women praised his stately form,
 Though wreck'd by many a winter's storm;
 The youth with awe and wonder saw
 His strength surpassing Nature's law.
 Thus judged, as is their wont, the crowd, 680
 Till murmur rose to clamours loud.
 But not a glance from that proud ring
 Of peers who circled round the King
 With Douglas held communion kind,
 Or call'd the banish'd man to mind;
 No, not from those who, at the chase,
 Once held his side the honour'd place,
 Begirt his board, and, in the field,
 Found safety underneath his shield;
 For he whom royal eyes disown 690
 When was his form to courtiers known!

XXV.

The monarch saw the gambols flag,
And bade let loose a gallant stag,
Whose pride, the holiday to crown,
Two favourite greyhounds should pull down,
That venison free, and Bordeaux wine,
Might serve the archery to dine.
But Lufra,—whom from Douglas' side
Nor bribe nor threat could e'er divide,
The fleetest hound in all the North,—
Brave Lufra saw, and darted forth.
She left the royal hounds mid-way,
And dashing on the antler'd prey,
Sunk her sharp muzzle in his flank,
And deep the flowing life-blood drank.
The King's stout huntsman saw the sport
By strange intruder broken short,
Came up, and with his leash unbound,
In anger struck the noble hound.
—The Douglas had endured, that morn,
The King's cold look, the nobles' scorn,
And last, and worst to spirit proud,
Had borne the pity of the crowd;
But Lufra had been fondly bred,
To share his board, to watch his bed,
And oft would Ellen Lufra's neck
In maiden glee with garlands deck;
They were such playmates, that with name
Of Lufra, Ellen's image came.
His stifled wrath is brimming high,
In darken'd brow and flashing eye;
As waves before the bark divide,
The crowd gave way before his stride;
Needs but a buffet and no more,
The groom lies senseless in his gore.

700

710

720

Such blow no other hand could deal,
Though gauntleted in glove of steel.

XXVI.

Then clamour'd loud the royal train,
And brandish'd swords and staves amain,
But stern the baron's warning—"Back!
Back, on your lives, ye menial pack!
Beware the Douglas.—Yes! behold,
King James! the Douglas, doom'd of old,
And vainly sought for near and far,
A victim to atone the war,
A willing victim, now attends,
Nor craves thy grace but for his friends."—
"Thus is my clemency repaid?
Presumptuous lord!" the monarch said;
"Of thy mis-proud ambitious clan,
Thou, James of Bothwell, wert the man,
The only man, in whom a foe
My woman-mercy would not know:
But shall a monarch's presence brook
Injurious blow, and haughty look?—
What ho! the Captain of our Guard!
Give the offender fitting ward.—
Break off the sports!"—for tumult rose,
And yeomen 'gan to bend their bows,—
"Break off the sports!" he said, and frown'd,
"And bid our horsemen clear the ground."

XXVII.

Then uproar wild and misarray
Marr'd the fair form of festal day.
The horsemen prick'd among the crowd,
Repell'd by threats and insult loud;
To earth are borne the old and weak,

The timorous fly, the women shriek;
 With flint, with shaft, with staff, with bar,
 The hardier urge tumultuous war.
 At once round Douglas darkly sweep 760
 The royal spears in circle deep,
 And slowly scale the pathway steep;
 While on the rear in thunder pour
 The rabble with disorder'd roar.
 With grief the noble Douglas saw
 The commons rise against the law,
 And to the leading soldier said,—
 “ Sir John of Hyndford! ’twas my blade,
 That knighthood on thy shoulder laid;
 For that good deed, permit me then 770
 A word with these misguided men.

XXVIII.

“ Hear, gentle friends! ere yet for me,
 Ye break the bands of fealty.
 My life, my honour, and my cause,
 I tender free to Scotland’s laws.
 Are these so weak as must require
 The aid of your misguided ire?
 Or, if I suffer causeless wrong,
 Is then my selfish rage so strong,
 My sense of public weal so low, 780
 That, for mean vengeance on a foe,
 Those cords of love I should unbind
 Which knit my country and my kind?
 Oh no! Believe, in yonder tower
 It will not soothe my captive hour,
 To know those spears our foes should dread
 For me in kindred gore are red;
 To know, in fruitless brawl begun,
 For me, that mother wails her son;
 For me, that widow’s mate expires; 790

For me, that orphans weep their sires;
That patriots mourn insulted laws,
And curse the Douglas for the cause.
O let your patience ward such ill,
And keep your right to love me still!"

XXIX.

The crowd's wild fury sunk again
In tears, as tempests melt in rain.
With lifted hands and eyes, they pray'd
For blessings on his generous head,
Who for his country felt alone, 800
And prized her blood beyond his own.
Old men, upon the verge of life,
Bless'd him who stay'd the civil strife;
And mothers held their babes on high,
The self-devoted chief to spy,
Triumphant over wrongs and ire,
To whom the prattlers owed a sire:
Even the rough soldier's heart was moved;
As if behind some bier beloved,
With trailing arms and drooping head, 810
The Douglas up the hill he led,
And at the Castle's battled verge,
With sighs resign'd his honour'd charge.

XXX.

The offended monarch rode apart,
With bitter thought and swelling heart,
And would not now vouchsafe again
Through Stirling streets to lead his train.
"O Lennox, who would wish to rule
This changeling crowd, this common fool?
Hear'st thou," he said, "the loud acclaim, 820
With which they shout the Douglas name?"

With like acclaim, the vulgar throat
 Strain'd for King James their morning note;
 With like acclaim they hail'd the day
 When first I broke the Douglas' sway;
 And like acclaim would Douglas greet,
 If he could hurl me from my seat.
 Who o'er the herd would wish to reign,
 Fantastic, fickle, fierce, and vain!
 Vain as the leaf upon the stream,
 And fickle as a changeful dream;
 Fantastic as a woman's mood,
 And fierce as Frenzy's fever'd blood.
 Thou many-headed monster-thing,
 O who could wish to be thy king!

830

XXXI.

"But soft! what messenger of speed
 Spurs hitherward his panting steed?
 I guess his cognizance afar—
 What from our cousin, John of Mar?"—
 "He prays, my liege, your sports keep bound
 Within the safe and guarded ground:
 For some foul purpose yet unknown,—
 Most sure for evil to the throne,—
 The outlaw'd chieftain, Roderick Dhu,
 Has summon'd his rebellious crew;
 'Tis said, in James of Bothwell's aid
 These loose banditti stand array'd.
 The Earl of Mar, this morn, from Doune,
 To break their muster march'd, and soon
 Your grace will hear of battle fought;
 But earnestly the earl besought,
 Till for such danger he provide,
 With scanty train you will not ride."

840

850

XXXII.

“Thou warn’st me I have done amiss,—
I should have earlier look’d to this:
I lost it in this bustling day.
—Retrace with speed thy former way;
Spare not for spoiling of thy steed,
The best of mine shall be thy meed.
Say to our faithful Lord of Mar, 860
We do forbid the intended war:
Roderick, this morn, in single fight,
Was made our prisoner by a knight;
And Douglas hath himself and cause
Submitted to our kingdom’s laws.
The tidings of their leaders lost
Will soon dissolve the mountain host,
Nor would we that the vulgar feel,
For their chief’s crimes, avenging steel.
Bear Mar our message, Braco; fly!”— 870
He turn’d his steed,—“My liege, I hie,—
Yet, ere I cross this lily lawn,
I fear the broadswords will be drawn.”
The turf the flying courser spurn’d,
And to his towers the King return’d.

XXXIII.

Ill with King James’s mood that day,
Suited gay feast and minstrel lay;
Soon were dismiss’d the courtly throng,
And soon cut short the festal song.
Nor less upon the sadden’d town 880
The evening sunk in sorrow down.
The burghers spoke of civil jar,
Of rumour’d feuds and mountain war,
Of Moray, Mar, and Roderick Dhu,
All up in arms:—the Douglas too,

They mourn'd him pent within the hold,
"Where stout Earl William was of old."
And there his word the speaker staid,
And finger on his lip he laid,
Or pointed to his dagger blade.
But jaded horsemen, from the west,
At evening to the Castle press'd;
And busy talkers said they bore
Tidings of fight on Katrine's shore;
At noon the deadly fray begun,
And lasted till the set of sun.
Thus giddy rumour shook the town,
Till closed the Night her pennons brown.

CANTO SIXTH.

THE GUARD-ROOM.

I.

THE sun, awakening, through the smoky air
Of the dark city casts a sullen glance,
Lousing each caitiff to his task of care,
Of sinful man the sad inheritance;
Summoning revellers from the lagging dance,
Scaring the prowling robber to his den;
Bidding on battled tower the warder's lance,
And warning student pale to leave his pen,
And yield his drowsy eyes to the kind nurse of men.

What various scenes, and, O! what scenes of woe, 10
Are witness'd by that red and struggling beam!
The fever'd patient, from his pallet low,
Through crowded hospital beholds its stream;
The ruin'd maiden trembles at its gleam,
The debtor wakes to thought of gyve and jail,
The love-lorn wretch starts from tormenting dream;
The wakeful mother, by the glimmering pale,
Prims her sick infant's couch, and soothes his feeble wail.

II.

At dawn the towers of Stirling rang 20
With soldier-step and weapon-clang,
While drums, with rolling note, foretell
Relief to weary sentinel.
Through narrow loop and casement barr'd,

The sunbeams sought the Court of Guard,
 And, struggling with the smoky air,
 Deaden'd the torches' yellow glare.
 In comfortless alliance shone
 The lights through arch of blacken'd stone,
 And show'd wild shapes in garb of war,
 Faces deform'd with beard and scar, 30
 All haggard from the midnight watch,
 And fever'd with the stern debauch;
 For the oak table's massive board,
 Flooded with wine, with fragments stored,
 And beakers drain'd, and cups o'erthrown,
 Show'd in what sport the night had flown.
 Some, weary, snored on floor and bench;
 Some labour'd still their thirst to quench;
 Some, chill'd with watching, spread their hands
 O'er the huge chimney's dying brands, 40
 While round them, or beside them flung,
 At every step their harness rung.

III.

These drew not for their fields the sword,
 Like tenants of a feudal lord,
 Nor own'd the patriarchal claim
 Of chieftain in their leader's name;
 Adventurers they, from far who roved,
 To live by battle which they loved.
 There the Italian's clouded face,
 The swarthy Spaniard's there you trace; 50
 The mountain-loving Switzer there
 More freely breathed in mountain-air;
 The Fleming there despised the soil,
 That paid so ill the labourer's toil;
 Their rolls show'd French and German name;
 And merry England's exiles came,
 To share, with ill-conceal'd disdain,

Of Scotland's pay the scanty gain.
 All brave in arms, well train'd to wield
 The heavy halberd, brand, and shield; 60
 In camps licentious, wild, and bold;
 In pillage fierce and uncontroll'd;
 And now, by holytide and feast,
 From rules of discipline released.

IV.

They held debate of bloody fray,
 Fought 'twixt Loch Katrine and Achray.
 Fierce was their speech, and, 'mid their words,
 Their hands oft grappled to their swords;
 Nor sunk their tone to spare the ear
 Of wounded comrades groaning near, 70
 Whose mangled limbs, and bodies gored,
 Bore token of the mountain sword,
 Though, neighbouring to the Court of Guard,
 Their prayers and feverish wails were heard;
 Sad burden to the ruffian joke,
 And savage oath by fury spoke!—
 At length up-started John of Brent,
 A yeoman from the banks of Trent;
 A stranger, to respect or fear,
 In peace a chaser of the deer, 80
 In host a hardy mutineer,
 But still the boldest of the crew,
 When deed of danger was to do.
 He grieved, that day, their games cut short,
 And marr'd the dicer's brawling sport,
 And shouted loud, "Renew the bowl!
 And, while a merry catch I troll,
 Let each the buxom chorus bear,
 Like brethren of the brand and spear."

V.

SOLDIER'S SONG.

Our vicar still preaches that Peter and Poule 90
 Laid a swinging long curse on the bonny brown bowl,
 That there's wrath and despair in the jolly black-jack,
 And the seven deadly sins in a flagon of sack;
 Yet whoop, Barnaby! off with thy liquor,
 Drink upsees out, and a fig for the vicar!

Our vicar he calls it damnation to sip
 The ripe ruddy dew of a woman's dear lip,
 Says, that Beelzebub lurks in her kerchief so sly,
 And Apollyon shoots darts from her merry black eye;
 Yet whoop, Jack! kiss Gillian the quicker, 100
 Till she bloom like a rose, and a fig for the vicar!

Our vicar thus preaches—and why should he not?
 For the dues of his cure are the placket and pot;
 And 'tis right of his office poor laymen to lurch,
 Who infringe the domains of our good Mother Church.
 Yet whoop, bully-boys! off with your liquor,
 Sweet Marjorie's the word, and a fig for the vicar!

VI.

The warder's challenge, heard without,
 Staid in mid-roar the merry shout.
 A soldier to the portal went,— 110
 "Here is old Bertram, sirs, of Ghent;
 And,—beat for jubilee the drum!
 A maid and minstrel with him come."
 Bertram, a Fleming, grey and scarr'd,
 Was entering now the Court of Guard,
 A harper with him, and in plaid
 All muffled close, a mountain mæid,

Who backward shrunk, to 'scape the view
Of the loose scene and boisterous crew.
“What news?” they roar'd:—“I only know, 120
From noon till eve we fought with foe,
As wild and as untamable
As the rude mountains where they dwell;
On both sides store of blood is lost,
Nor much success can either boast.”—
“But whence thy captives, friend? such spoil
As theirs must needs reward thy toil.
Old dost thou wax, and wars grow sharp;
Thou now hast glee-maiden and harp!
Get thee an ape, and trudge the land, 130
The leader of a juggler band.”—

VII.

“No, comrade;—no such fortune mine.
After the fight these sought our line,
That aged harper and the girl,
And, having audience of the Earl,
Mar bade I should purvey them steed,
And bring them hitherward with speed.
Forbear your mirth and rude alarm,
For none shall do them shame or harm.”—
“Hear ye his boast?” cried John of Brent, 140
Ever to strife and jangling bent;
“Shall he strike doe beside our lodge,
And yet the jealous niggard grudge
To pay the forester his fee?
I'll have my share, howe'er it be,
Despite of Moray, Mar, or thee.”
Bertram his forward step withstood;
And, burning in his vengeful mood,
Old Allan, though unfit for strife,
Laid hand upon his dagger-knife; 150
But Ellen boldly stepp'd between,

And dropp'd at once the tartan screen:—
 So, from his morning cloud, appears
 The sun of May, through summer tears.
 The savage soldiery, amazed,
 As on descended angel gazed;
 Even hardy Brent, abash'd and tamed,
 Stood half admiring, half ashamed.

VIII.

Boldly she spoke,—“Soldiers, attend!
 My father was the soldier's friend;
 Cheer'd him in camps, in marches led,
 And with him in the battle bled.
 Not from the valiant, or the strong,
 Should exile's daughter suffer wrong.”—
 Answer'd De Brent, most forward still
 In every feat or good or ill,—
 “I shame me of the part I play'd:
 And thou an outlaw's child, poor maid!
 An outlaw I by forest laws,
 And merry Needwood knows the cause.
 Poor Rose,—if Rose be living now,”—
 He wiped his iron eye and brow,—
 “Must bear such age, I think, as thou.
 Hear ye, my mates;—I go to call
 The captain of our watch to hall:
 There lies my halberd on the floor;
 And he that steps my halberd o'er,
 To do the maid injurious part,
 My shaft shall quiver in his heart!—
 Beware loose speech, or jesting rough:
 Ye all know John de Brent. Enough.”

IX.

Their captain came, a gallant young,—
 (Of Tullibardine's house he sprung,)

Nor wore he yet the spurs of knight;
 Gay was his mien, his humour light,
 And, though by courtesy controll'd,
 Forward his speech, his bearing bold.
 The high-born maiden ill could brook
 The scanning of his curious look
 And dauntless eye;—and yet, in sooth, 190
 Young Lewis was a generous youth;
 But Ellen's lovely face and mien,
 Ill suited to the garb and scene,
 Might lightly bear construction strange,
 And give loose fancy scope to range.
 "Welcome to Stirling towers, fair maid!
 Come ye to seek a champion's aid,
 On palfrey white, with harper hoar,
 Like errant damosel of yore?
 Does thy high quest a knight require, 200
 Or may the venture suit a squire?"—
 Her dark eye flash'd;—she paused and sigh'd,—
 "O what have I to do with pride!—
 —Through scenes of sorrow, shame, and strife,
 A suppliant for a father's life,
 I crave an audience of the King.
 Behold, to back my suit, a ring,
 The royal pledge of grateful claims,
 Given by the Monarch to Fitz-James."

X.

The signet-ring young Lewis took, 210
 With deep respect and alter'd look;
 And said,—“This ring our duties own;
 And pardon, if to worth unknown,
 In semblance mean obscurely veil'd,
 Lady, in aught my folly fail'd.
 Soon as the day flings wide his gates,
 The King shall know what suitor waits.

Please you, meanwhile, in fitting bower
Repose you till his waking hour;
Female attendance shall obey 220
Your hest, for service or array.
Permit I marshal you the way.”
But, ere she followed, with the grace
And open bounty of her race,
She bade her slender purse be shared
Among the soldiers of the guard.
The rest with thanks their guerdon took;
But Brent, with shy and awkward look,
On the reluctant maiden’s hold
Forced bluntly back the proffer’d gold;— 230
“Forgive a haughty English heart,
And O forget its ruder part!
The vacant purse shall be my share,
Which in my barret-cap I’ll bear,
Perchance, in jeopardy of war,
Where gayer crests may keep afar.”
With thanks,—’twas all she could—the maid
His rugged courtesy repaid.

XI.

When Ellen forth with Lewis went,
Allan made suit to John of Brent:— 240
“My lady safe, O let your grace
Give me to see my master’s face!
His minstrel I,—to share his doom
Bound from the cradle to the tomb.
Tenth in descent, since first my sires
Waked for his noble house their lyres,
Nor one of all the race was known
But prized its weal above their own.
With the chief’s birth begins our care;
Our harp must soothe the infant heir, 250
Teach the youth tales of fight, and grace

His earliest feat of field or chase;
 In peace, in war, our rank we keep,
 We cheer his board, we soothe his sleep,
 Nor leave him till we pour our verse,—
 A doleful tribute!—o'er his hearse.
 Then let me share his captive lot;
 It is my right—deny it not!"—
 "Little we reck," said John of Brent,
 "We Southern men, of long descent;
 Nor wot we how a name—a word—
 Makes clansmen vassals to a lord:
 Yet kind my noble landlord's part,—
 God bless the house of Beaudesert!
 And, but I loved to drive the deer,
 More than to guide the labouring steer.
 I had not dwelt an outcast here
 Come, good old minstrel, follow me,
 Thy lord and chieftain shalt thou see."

260

XII.

Then, from a rusted iron hook,
 A bunch of ponderous keys he took,
 Lighted a torch, and Allan led
 Through grated arch and passage dread.
 Portals they pass'd, where, deep within,
 Spoke prisoner's moan, and fetters' din;
 Through rugged vaults, where, loosely stored,
 Lay wheel, and axe, and headsman's sword,
 And many an hideous engine grim,
 For wrenching joint, and crushing limb,
 By artists form'd who deem'd it shame
 And sin to give their work a name.
 They halted at a low-brow'd porch,
 And Brent to Allan gave the torch,
 While bolt and chain he backward roll'd,
 And made the bar unhasp its hold.

270

280

They enter'd:—'twas a prison-room
 Of stern security and gloom,
 Yet not a dungeon; for the day
 Through lofty gratings found its way,
 And rude and antique garniture
 Deck'd the sad walls and oaken floor;
 Such as the rugged days of old
 Deem'd fit for captive noble's hold.
 "Here," said De Brent, "thou mayst remain
 Till the leech visit him again.
 Strict is his charge, the warders tell,
 To tend the noble prisoner well."
 Retiring then the bolt he drew,
 And the lock's murmurs growl'd anew.
 Roused at the sound, from lowly bed
 A captive feebly raised his head;
 The wondering minstrel look'd, and knew—
 Not his dear lord, but Roderick Dhu!
 For, come from where Clan-Alpine fought,
 They, erring, deem'd the chief he sought.

XIII.

As the tall ship, whose lofty prore
 Shall never stem the billows more,
 Deserted by her gallant band,
 Amid the breakers lies astrand,—
 So, on his couch, lay Roderick Dhu!
 And oft his fever'd limbs he threw
 In toss abrupt, as when her sides
 Lie rocking in the advancing tides,
 That shake her frame with ceaseless beat,
 Yet cannot heave her from her seat;—
 O! how unlike her course at sea!
 Or his free step on hill and lea!—
 Soon as the minstrel he could scan,
 —"What of thy lady?—of my clan?—

My mother?—Douglas?—tell me all? 320
 Have they been ruin'd in my fall?
 Ah, yes! or wherefore art thou here!
 Yet speak,—speak boldly,—do not fear.”—
 (For Allan, who his mood well knew,
 Was choked with grief and terror too.)
 “Who fought—who fled?—Old man, be brief;—
 Some might—for they had lost their chief.
 Who basely live?—who bravely died?”
 “O, calm thee, chief!” the minstrel cried,
 “Ellen is safe;”—“For that thank Heaven!”— 330
 “And hopes are for the Douglas given;—
 The Lady Margaret too is well;
 And, for thy clan,—on field or fell,
 Has never harp of minstrel told,
 Of combat fought so true and bold.
 Thy stately Pine is yet unbent,
 Though many a goodly bough is rent.”

XIV.

The chieftain rear'd his form on high,
 And fever's fire was in his eye;
 But ghastly, pale, and livid streaks 340
 Chequer'd his swarthy brow and cheeks.
 —“Hark, minstrel! I have heard thee play,
 With measure bold, on festal day,
 In yon lone isle, . . . again where ne'er
 Shall harper play, or warrior hear! . . .
 That stirring air that peals on high,
 O'er Dermid's race our victory.—
 Strike it!—and then, (for well thou canst,)
 Free from thy minstrel spirit glanced,
 Fling me the picture of the fight, 350
 When met my clan the Saxon might.
 I'll listen, till my fancy hears
 The clang of swords, the crash of spears!

These grates, these walls, shall vanish then,
 For the fair field of fighting men,
 And my free spirit burst away,
 As if it soar'd from battle fray."
 The trembling bard with awe obey'd,—
 Slow on the harp his hand he laid;
 But soon remembrance of the sight
 He witness'd from the mountain's height,
 With what old Bertram told at night,
 Awaken'd the full power of song,
 And bore him in career along;—
 As shallop launch'd on river's tide,
 That slow and fearful leaves the side,
 But, when it feels the middle stream,
 Drives downward swift as lightning's beam.

XV.

BATTLE OF BEAL' AN DUINE.

"The Minstrel came once more to view
 The eastern ridge of Benvenue,
 For ere he parted, he would say
 Farewell to lovely Loch Achray—
 Where shall he find, in foreign land,
 So lone a lake, so sweet a strand!

There is no breeze upon the fern,
 No ripple on the lake,

Upon her eyry nods the erne,

The deer has sought the brake;

The small birds will not sing aloud,

The springing trout lies still,

So darkly glooms yon thunder cloud,

That swathes, as with a purple shroud,

Benledi's distant hill.

Is it the thunder's solemn sound

That mutters deep and dread,

Or echoes from the groaning ground
 The warrior's measured tread?
 Is it the lightning's quivering glance
 That on the thicket streams,
 Or do they flash on spear and lance 390
 The sun's retiring beams?
 —I see the dagger-crest of Mar,
 I see the Moray's silver star,
 Wave o'er the cloud of Saxon war,
 That up the lake comes winding far!
 To hero bounè for battle-strife,
 Or bard of martial lay,
 'Twere worth ten years of peaceful life,
 One glance at their array!

XVI.

"Their light-arm'd archers far and near 400
 Survey'd the tangled ground,
 Their centre ranks, with pike and spear,
 A twilight forest frown'd,
 Their barded horsemen, in the rear,
 The stern battalia crown'd.
 No cymbal clash'd, no clarion rang,
 Still were the pipe and drum;
 Save heavy tread, and armour's clang,
 The sullen march was dumb.
 There breathed no wind their crests to shake, 410
 Or wave their flags abroad;
 Scarce the frail aspen seem'd to quake,
 That shadow'd o'er their road.
 Their vaward scouts no tidings bring,
 Can rouse no lurking foe,
 Nor spy a trace of living thing,
 Save when they stirr'd the roe;
 The host moves, like a deep-sea wave,
 Where rise no rocks its pride to brave,

High-swelling, dark, and slow.
The lake is pass'd, and now they gain
A narrow and a broken plain,
Before the Trosachs' rugged jaws;
And here the horse and spearmen pause,
While, to explore the dangerous glen,
Dive through the pass the archer-men.

XVII.

"At once there rose so wild a yell
Within that dark and narrow dell,
As all the fiends, from heaven that fell,
Had peal'd the banner-cry of hell!
Forth from the pass in tumult driven,
Like chaff before the wind of heaven,

The archery appear:

For life! for life! their flight they ply—
And shriek, and shout, and battle-cry,
And plaids and bonnets waving high,
And broadswords flashing to the sky,
Are maddening in the rear.
Onward they drive, in dreadful race,
Pursuers and pursued;

Before that tide of flight and chase,
How shall it keep its rooted place,

The spearmen's twilight wood?—

'Down, down,' cried Mar, 'your lances down!

Bear back both friend and foe!'

Like reeds before the tempest's frown,
That serried grove of lances brown

At once lay levell'd low;

And closely shouldering side to side,
The bristling ranks the onset bide.—

'We'll quell the savage mountaineer,
As their Tinchel crows the game!

They come as fleet as forest deer,
We'll drive them back as tame.'—

XVIII.

“ Bearing before them, in their course,
The relics of the archer force,
Like wave with crest of sparkling foam,
Right onward did Clan-Alpine come.

Above the tide, each broadsword bright
Was brandishing like beam of light, 460

Each targe was dark below;
And with the ocean's mighty swing,
When heaving to the tempest's wing,
They hurl'd them on the foe.

I heard the lance's shivering crash,
As when the whirlwind rends the ash;
I heard the broadsword's deadly clang,
As if an hundred anvils rang!

But Moray wheel'd his rearward rank
Of horsemen on Clan-Alpine's flank, 470
—‘ My banner-man, advance!

I see,’ he cried, ‘ their column shake.—
Now, gallants! for your ladies' sake,
Upon them with the lance!’—

The horsemen dash'd among the rout,
As deer break through the broom;
Their steeds are stout, their swords are out,
They soon make lightsome room.

Clan-Alpine's best are backward borne—
Where, where was Roderick then! 480

One blast upon his bugle-horn
Were worth a thousand men.

And reflux through the pass of fear
The battle's tide was pour'd;
Vanish'd the Saxon's struggling spear,
Vanish'd the mountain-sword.

As Bracklinn's chasm, so black and steep,
 Receives her roaring linn,
 As the dark caverns of the deep
 Suck the wild whirlpool in,
 So did the deep and darksome pass
 Devour the battle's mingled mass:
 None linger now upon the plain,
 Save those who ne'er shall fight again.

49

XIX.

"Now westward rolls the battle's din,
 That deep and doubling pass within,
 —Minstrel, away! the work of fate
 Is bearing on: its issue wait,
 Where the rude Trosachs' dread defile
 Opens on Katrine's lake and isle.—
 Grey Benvenue I soon repass'd,
 Loch Katrine lay beneath me cast.
 The sun is set;—the clouds are met,
 The lowering scowl of heaven
 An inky hue of livid blue
 To the deep lake has given;
 Strange gusts of wind from mountain-glen
 Swept o'er the lake, then sunk agen.
 I heeded not the eddying surge,
 Mine eye but saw the Trosachs' gorge,
 Mine ear but heard the sullen sound,
 Which like an earthquake shook the ground,
 And spoke the stern and desperate strife
 That parts not but with parting life,
 Seeming, to minstrel ear, to toll
 The dirge of many a passing soul.
 Nearer it comes—the dim wood glen
 The martial flood disgorged agen,
 But not in mingled tide;
 The plaided warriors of the North

50

51

52

High on the mountain thunder forth
 And overhang its side;
 While by the lake below appears
 The dark'ning cloud of Saxon spears.
 At weary bay each shatter'd band,
 Eyeing their foemen, sternly stand;
 Their banners stream like tatter'd sail,
 That flings its fragments to the gale,
 And broken arms and disarray
 Mark'd the fell havoc of the day. 530

XX.

"Viewing the mountain's ridge askance,
 The Saxon stood in sullen trance,
 Till Moray pointed with his lance,
 And cried—'Behold yon isle!—
 See! none are left to guard its strand,
 But women weak, that wring the hand:
 'Tis there of yore the robber band
 Their booty wont to pile;—
 My purse, with bonnet-pieces store,
 To him will swim a bow-shot o'er, 540
 And loose a shallop from the shore.
 Lightly we'll tame the war-wolf then,
 Lords of his mate, and brood, and den.'
 Forth from the ranks a spearman sprung,
 On earth his casque and corselet rung,
 He plunged him in the wave:—
 All saw the deed—the purpose knew,
 And to their clamours Benvenue
 A mingled echo gave;
 The Saxons shout, their mate to cheer, 550
 The helpless females scream for fear,
 And yells for rage the mountaineer.
 'Twas then, as by the outcry riven,
 Pour'd down at once the lowering heaven;

A whirlwind swept Loch Katrine's breast,
Her billows rear'd their snowy crest.
Well for the swimmer swell'd they high,
To mar the Highland marksman's eye;
For round him shower'd, 'mid rain and hail,
The vengeful arrows of the Gael.—
In vain—He nears the isle—and lo!
His hand is on a shallop's bow.
—Just then a flash of lightning came,
It tinged the waves and strand with flame;—
I mark'd Duncraggan's widow'd dame,
Behind an oak I saw her stand,
A naked dirk gleam'd in her hand:—
It darken'd,—but, amid the moan
Of waves, I heard a dying groan;—
Another flash!—the spearman floats
A weltering corse beside the boats,
And the stern matron o'er him stood,
Her hand and dagger streaming blood.

XXI.

“‘Revenge! revenge!’ the Saxons cried,
The Gaels' exulting shout replied.
Despite the elemental rage,
Again they hurried to engage;
But, ere they closed in desperate fight,
Bloody with spurring came a knight,
Sprung from his horse, and, from a crag,
Waved 'twixt the hosts a milk-white flag.
Clarion and trumpet by his side
Rung forth a truce-note high and wide,
While, in the Monarch's name, afar
An herald's voice forbade the war,
For Bothwell's lord, and Roderick bold,
Were both, he said, in captive hold.”
—But here the lay made sudden stand,

The harp escaped the minstrel's hand!—
 Oft had he stolen a glance, to spy 590
 How Roderick brook'd his minstrelsy:
 At first, the chieftain, to the chime,
 With lifted hand, kept feeble time;
 That motion ceased,—yet feeling strong
 Varied his look as changed the song;
 At length, no more his deafen'd ear
 The minstrel melody can hear;
 His face grows sharp,—his hands are clench'd
 As if some pang his heart-strings wrench'd;
 Set are his teeth, his fading eye 600
 Is sternly fix'd on vacancy;
 Thus, motionless, and moanless, drew
 His parting breath stout Roderick Dhu!—
 Old Allan-bane look'd on aghast,
 While grim and still his spirit pass'd;
 But when he saw that life was fled,
 He pour'd his wailing o'er the dead.

XXII.

LAMENT.

“And art thou cold and lowly laid,
 Thy foeman's dread, thy people's aid,
 Breadalbane's boast, Clan-Alpine's shade! 610
 For thee shall none a requiem say?
 —For thee,—who loved the minstrel's lay,
 For thee, of Bothwell's house the stay,
 The shelter of her exiled line,
 E'en in this prison-house of thine
 I'll wail for Alpine's honour'd Pine!

“What groans shall yonder valleys fill!
 What shrieks of grief shall rend yon hill!
 What tears of burning rage shall thrill,
 ,

When mourns thy tribe thy battles done, 620
 Thy fall before the race was won,
 Thy sword ungirt ere set of sun!
 There breathes not clansman of thy line,
 But would have given his life for thine.—
 O woe for Alpine's honour'd Pine!

“Sad was thy lot on mortal stage!—
 The captive thrush may brook the cage,
 The prison'd eagle dies for rage.
 Brave spirit, do not scorn my strain!
 And, when its notes awake again, 630
 Even she, so long beloved in vain,
 Shall with my harp her voice combine,
 And mix her woe and tears with mine,
 To wail Clan-Alpine's honour'd Pine.”—

XXIII.

Ellen, the while, with bursting heart,
 Remain'd in lordly bower apart,
 Where play'd, with many colour'd gleams,
 Through storied pane the rising beams.
 In vain on gilded roof they fall,
 And lighten'd up a tapestried wall, 640
 And for her use a menial train
 A rich collation spread in vain.
 The banquet proud, the chamber gay,
 Scarce drew one curious glance astray;
 Or if she look'd, 'twas but to say,
 With better omen dawn'd the day
 In that lone isle, where waved on high
 The dun-deer's hide for canopy;
 Where oft her noble father shared
 The simple meal her care prepared, 650
 While Lufra, crouching by her side,
 Her station claim'd with jealous pride,

And Douglas, bent on woodland game,
Spoke of the chase to Malcolm Græme,
Whose answer, oft at random made,
The wandering of his thoughts betray'd.—
Those who such simple joys have known,
Are taught to prize them when they're gone.
But sudden, see, she lifts her head!
The window seeks with cautious tread. 660
What distant music has the power
To win her in this woeful hour!
'Twas from a turret that o'erhung
Her latticed bower, the strain was sung.

XXIV.

LAY OF THE IMPRISONED HUNTSMAN.

“My hawk is tired of perch and hood,
My idle greyhound loathes his food,
My horse is weary of his stall,
And I am sick of captive thrall.
I wish I were as I have been,
Hunting the hart in forest green, 670
With bended bow and bloodhound free,
For that's the life is meet for me.
I hate to learn the ebb of time,
From yon dull steeple's drowsy chime,
Or mark it as the sunbeams crawl,
Inch after inch, along the wall.
The lark was wont my matins ring,
The sable rook my vespers sing;
These towers, although a king's they be,
Have not a hall of joy for me. 680
No more at dawning morn I rise,
And sun myself in Ellen's eyes,
Drive the fleet deer the forest through,
And homeward wend with evening dew;

A blithesome welcome blithely meet,
 And lay my trophies at her feet,
 While fled the eve on wing of glee,—
 That life is lost to love and me!”

XXV.

The heart-sick lay was hardly said,
 The list'ner had not turn'd her head,
 It trickled still, the starting tear,
 When light a footstep struck her ear,
 And Snowdown's graceful knight was near.
 She turn'd the hastier, lest again
 The prisoner should renew his strain.
 “O welcome, brave Fitz-James!” she said;
 “How may an almost orphan maid
 Pay the deep debt”—“O say not so!
 To me no gratitude you owe.
 Not mine, alas! the boon to give,
 And bid thy noble father live;
 I can but be thy guide, sweet maid,
 With Scotland's King thy suit to aid.
 No tyrant he, though ire and pride
 May lay his better mood aside.
 Come, Ellen, come! 'tis more than time,
 He holds his court at morning prime.”
 With beating heart, and bosom wrung,
 As to a brother's arm she clung.
 Gently he dried the falling tear,
 And gently whisper'd hope and cheer;
 Her faltering steps, half led, half staid,
 Through gallery fair, and high arcade,
 Till, at his touch, its wings of pride
 A portal arch unfolded wide.

690

700

710

XXVI.

Within 'twas brilliant all and light,
 A thronging scene of figures bright;
 It glow'd on Ellen's dazzled sight,
 As when the setting sun has given
 Ten thousand hues to summer even, 720
 And from their tissue fancy frames
 Aërial knights and fairy dames.
 Still by Fitz-James her footing staid;
 A few faint steps she forward made,
 Then slow her drooping head she raised,
 And fearful round the presence gazed;
 For him she sought who own'd this state,
 The dreaded prince whose will was fate!—
 She gazed on many a princely port,
 Might well have ruled a royal court; 730
 On many a splendid garb she gazed,—
 Then turn'd bewildered and amazed,
 For all stood bare; and, in the room,
 Fitz-James alone wore cap and plume.
 To him each lady's look was lent;
 On him each courtier's eye was bent;
 Midst furs and silks and jewels sheen,
 He stood, in simple Lincoln green,
 The centre of the glittering ring,—
 And Snowdown's Knight is Scotland's King. 740

XXVII.

As wreath of snow, on mountain-breast,
 Slides from the rock that gave it rest,
 Poor Ellen glided from her stay,
 And at the monarch's feet she lay;
 No word her choking voice commands,—
 She show'd the ring—she clasped her hands.
 O! not a moment could he brook,

The generous prince, that suppliant look!
 Gently he raised her,—and, the while,
 Check'd with a glance the circle's smile; 750
 Graceful, but grave, her brow he kiss'd,
 And bade her terrors be dismiss'd:—
 “Yes, fair; the wandering poor Fitz-James
 The fealty of Scotland claims.
 To him thy woes, thy wishes, bring;
 He will redeem his signet-ring.
 Ask nought for Douglas;—yester even,
 His prince and he have much forgiven.
 Wrong hath he had from slanderous tongue,
 I, from his rebel kinsmen, wrong. 760
 We would not, to the vulgar crowd,
 Yield what they craved with clamour loud;
 Calmly we heard and judg'd his cause,
 Our council aided, and our laws.
 I stanch'd thy father's death-feud stern
 With stout De Vaux and grey Glencairn;
 And Bothwell's lord henceforth we own
 The friend and bulwark of our throne.—
 But, lovely infidel, how now?
 What clouds thy misbelieving brow? 770
 Lord James of Douglas, lend thine aid;
 Thou must confirm this doubting maid.”

XXVIII.

Then forth the noble Douglas sprung,
 And on his neck his daughter hung.
 The monarch drank, that happy hour,
 The sweetest, holiest draught of Power,—
 When it can say, with godlike voice,
 Arise, sad Virtue, and rejoice!
 Yet would not James the general eye
 On Nature's raptures long should pry;
 He stepp'd between—“Nay, Douglas, nay, 780

Steal not my proselyte away!
 The riddle 'tis my right to read,
 That brought this happy chance to speed
 —Yes, Ellen, when disguised I stray
 In life's more low but happier way,
 'Tis under name which veils my power,
 Nor falsely veils—for Stirling's tower
 Of yore the name of Snowdown claims,
 And Normans call me James Fitz-James. 790
 Thus watch I o'er insulted laws,
 Thus learn to right the injured cause."—
 Then, in a tone apart and low,—
 "Ah, little traitress! none must know
 What idle dream, what lighter thought,
 What vanity full dearly bought,
 Join'd to thine eye's dark witchcraft, drew
 My spell-bound steps to Benvenue,
 In dangerous hour, and all but gave
 Thy monarch's life to mountain glaive!" 800
 Aloud he spoke—"Thou still dost hold
 That little talisman of gold,
 Pledge of my faith, Fitz-James's ring—
 What seeks fair Ellen of the King?"

XXIX.

Full well the conscious maiden guess'd
 He probed the weakness of her breast;
 But, with that consciousness, there came
 A lightening of her fears for Græme,
 And more she deem'd the monarch's ire
 Kindled 'gainst him, who, for her sire 810
 Rebellious broadsword boldly drew;
 And, to her generous feeling true,
 She craved the grace of Roderick Dhu.
 "Forbear thy suit:—the King of kings
 Alone can stay life's parting wings."

I know his heart, I know his hand,
 Have shared his cheer, and proved his brand:—
 My fairest earldom would I give
 To bid Clan-Alpine's chieftain live!—
 Hast thou no other boon to crave? 820
 No other captive friend to save?"
 Blushing, she turn'd her from the King,
 And to the Douglas gave the ring,
 As if she wished her sire to speak
 The suit that stain'd her glowing cheek.—
 "Nay, then, my pledge has lost its force,
 And stubborn justice holds her course.—
 Malcolm, come forth!"—and, at the word,
 Down kneel'd the Græme to Scotland's lord.
 "For thee, rash youth, no suppliant sues, 830
 From thee may Vengeance claim her dues,
 Who, nurtur'd underneath our smile,
 Hast paid our care by treacherous wile,
 And sought, amid thy faithful clan,
 A refuge for an outlaw'd man,
 Dishonouring thus thy loyal name—
 Fetters and warder for the Græme!"——
 His chain of gold the King unstrung,
 The links o'er Malcolm's neck he flung,
 Then gently drew the glittering band, 840
 And laid the clasp on Ellen's hand.

Harp of the North, farewell! The hills grow dark,
 On purple peaks a deeper shade descending;
 In twilight copse the glow-worm lights her spark,
 The deer, half-seen, are to the covert wending.
 Resume thy wizard elm! the fountain lending,
 And the wild breeze, thy wilder minstrelsy;
 Thy numbers sweet with nature's vespers blending,
 With distant echo from the fold and lea,
 And herd-boy's evening pipe, and hum of housing bee. 850

Yet, once again, farewell, thou Minstrel Harp!

Yet, once again, forgive my feeble sway,

And little reck I of the censure sharp

May idly cavil at an idle lay.

Much have I owed thy strains on life's long way,

Through secret woes the world has never known,

When on the weary night dawn'd wearier day,

And bitterer was the grief devour'd alone.

That I o'erlived such woes, Enchantress! is thine own.

Hark! as my lingering footsteps slow retire,

860

Some Spirit of the Air has waked thy string!

'Tis now a seraph bold, with touch of fire,

'Tis now the brush of Fairy's frolic wing.

Receding now, the dying numbers ring

Fainter and fainter down the rugged dell,

And now the mountain breezes scarcely bring

A wandering witch-note of the distant spell—

And now, 'tis silent all!—Enchantress, fare thee well!

NOTES

CANTO I.

Scott's brilliant story tells itself, and demands from the reader little or no previous knowledge of the history or geography of Scotland. It is well, however, to bear in mind that the scene is laid in the extreme southwestern highlands—a country of small but rugged mountains and beautiful lakes. The reader who has seen this charming district, or photographs of it, will have a slight advantage over others; but one may easily frame for himself an imaginary land, like any mountainous region he knows, provided that he gives his mountains sharp outlines and makes his lakes the glen lakes of a genuine mountain district. He must, moreover, be careful to keep down the scale of the picture. Scott's mountains are only three thousand feet high, the lakes only a few miles long, and the Highland district in which most of the poem moves scarcely larger than a New England township. This wild little region we must fancy inhabited by a Scottish clan, a rough and daring race, devoted to its chief and hardly holding allegiance to the king, whose authority is acknowledged fully only in the Lowlands. If we further figure the events as happening in the sixteenth century, in the days of James V., our ears are attuned for the enjoyment of a rapid and stirring tale of adventure and romance.

The unnumbered stanzas are merely introductory. The poet addresses the harp of the North, hanging in a spot memorable in Scotch history and thus typical of the wild old Scottish poetry, of which tradition has so much to say, and which was sung to the music of the harp. This ancient minstrelsy the poet is to revive, as best he can. *Numbers*, 3, is a Latin term for music or verse; *Caledon*, 10, is Scotland; *according*, 14, refers to the accord or concord between 'the song and the music: in the pause of the song the music continued alone.

I.-VIII.—With the numbered stanzas the story begins. The stag sleeps in the forest around Glen Artney, to the east of Benvoirlich, and hears at sunrise the sound of the chase. He runs south to Uam-Var and then west to Loch Achray, turns at the western end, where the ground rises abruptly, dodges the attack of the solitary pursuer, and escapes up an impassable glen. The whole run would have been fifteen miles or more, in a straight line, and must be imagined, on account of the windings of the chase, as perhaps twice as long. *Monan's rill*, 29, has not been identified. *Beam'd*, 45, horned; *rout*, 67, band; *linn*, 71, waterfall; *shrewdly*, 84, sharply; *embossed*, 117, usually, covered with raised figures, but here a hunting term, covered with foam; *quarry*, 127, the hunted animal; *whinyard*, 138, hunting-knife; *Trossachs*, 145, the wild region between Loch Achray and Loch Katrine.

IX.-XVI.—Our attention now turns to the hunter, whose horse has fallen dead from fatigue. He still keeps to the west, in search of some of his companions, but the path ends in a glen opening on the eastern extremity of Loch Katrine. He climbs the precipitous side of the glen, and from that eminence sees the whole lake, some nine miles long, and admires the scene, but fails to find any sign of habitation. Though not averse to spending the night out-of-doors, he is, as a Lowlander, not pleased at the thought of falling in with Highland plunderers. Nevertheless, he winds his horn, in the hope of discovering some one of his party. *Worth*, 166, an old and rare verb meaning *be*: woe be to the chase; *dingle*, 174, glen; *tower*, 196, of Babel; *pagod*, 202, pagoda; *sheen*, 208, bright; *clift*, 217, cleft; *wildering*, 274, wild.

XVII.-XXVI.—The unknown Lowland hero now meets the unknown Highland heroine. The poet takes pains to show from the outset that her heart is already pledged to one Malcolm, though she accepts the flattering compliments of the hunter, who is apparently a gentleman by birth and breeding. *Naiad*, 342, nymph; *Grace*, 344, one of the Graces who, in classical mythology, personify beauty; *snood*, 363, hair-ribbon; *wildered*, 434, lost, bewildered; *couch*, 438, of heath, according to Highland custom; *mere*, 441, lake; *rood*, 443, cross; *Lincoln green*, 464, a woollen, much worn by woodsmen, made with special excellence at Lincoln; *sooth*, 476, true; *doomed*, 477, destined; *Idæan*, 525, Mt. Ida, near Troy, *was*

famous for its vines ; *plant*, 528, a relative pronoun is understood.

XXVII.—XXXV.—On crossing the threshold of the lodge hidden on the tiny island, to which the hunter is led by the Lady of the Lake, he is startled by the falling from its sheath of a sword—a sign that he is an enemy of the house. The master of the lodge is absent, but the hunter is hospitably received by Ellen and her aunt. He announces himself as James Fitz-James, a Lowland knight, but they do not reveal their names, and in his dreams the knight connects them, in some vague way, with Douglas, a powerful noble who has been exiled by the king for political reasons. *Target*, 546, shield ; *brook*, 566, have strength, endure ; *Ferragus* and *Ascabert*, 573, giants famous in old European romances ; *though more than kindred knew*, 580, an unusually obscure line for Scott, meaning, a mother's due, which was more than the actual kinship would have led her to give ; *wot*, 596, knows ; *weird women*, 606, witches ; *pibroch*, 638, the bagpipe ; *reveillé*, 657, the signal for arising ; *orisons*, 738, prayers.

CANTO II.

I.—XV.—A glimpse of the plot now appears. At the departure of the stranger, early on the next morning, Ellen waves him a farewell, and it is evident that she is interested in him, though still true to the thought of her Malcolm Graeme, whose family name reveals him as a Scotch noble of high degree. From her conversation with the minstrel, the sudden silence of whose harp is a portent of disaster, it is plain that she is a daughter of the exiled Douglas, who has found refuge in this secret mountain hold of the black Sir Roderick, chief of the Clan-Alpine, also an outlaw. The dangers which face the maiden and her father are the likelihood that Roderick, on whom their safety depends, will insist on marrying Ellen, and the possibility that the Lowland knight may have been a spy of the king. *Bothwell's hall*, 141, a castle of the Douglasses, near Glasgow ; *reave*, 170, rend ; *lea*, 176, meadow. *The Bleeding Heart*, 200, the Douglas emblem. The heart of the brave Robert Bruce had been, at his own desire, given to a famous Douglas of the fourteenth century, to bear on a

crusade to the Holy Land. In a battle with the Moors, Douglas "flung before him the casket containing the precious relic, crying out, 'Onward as thou wert wont, thou noble heart, Douglas will follow thee.' Douglas was slain, but his body was recovered, and also the precious casket, and in the end Douglas was laid with his ancestors, and the heart of Bruce deposited in the church of Melrose Abbey" (Burton's *History of Scotland*). *Strathspey*, 206, a Highland dance; *Saxon*, 213, the Highlanders called the Lowlanders Saxons as having an admixture of English blood; *Lennox*, 216, to the southwest of the clan's territory; *Holy-Rood*, 221, the royal palace at Edinburgh; *guerdon*, 235, reward; *dispensation*, 236, permission from the pope would be necessary, inasmuch as Roderick and Ellen were cousins; *Bracklinn*, 270, a cataract near by; *claymore*, 274, the great Scottish sword; *while*, 303, time; *Tine-man*, 306, Lose-man, an ancestor thus nicknamed for his ill fortune, once allied with Percy of Northumberland, called Hotspur; *Beltane*, 319, Mayday; *canna*, 327, the cotton grass.

XVI.-XXVII.—Roderick now returns in triumph from a successful foray, and Douglas also appears. While engaged in the chase, he had met a considerable body of horsemen and hunters, and had escaped capture only by the kind offices of Malcolm Graeme, who, though the king's ward, had risked his life to guide Douglas in safety to Roderick's lodge. *Tartans*, 343, *bonnets*, 345: notice the Highland costume. *Chanters*, 351, pipes; *burden*, 392, chorus; *Vich*, 396, descendant of; *bourgeon*, 405, blossom; *dhu*, 408, black; *Glen Fruin*, 419 and the spots mentioned in the two lines following are in Lennox, and the reference is apparently to the victories of the foray just completed; *rosebud*, 431, Ellen; *Percy's Norman pennon*, 497, captured in a fourteenth century raid; *the waned crescent*, 504, the crescent was the badge of the Buccleuchs, a noted Scotch family; *Blantyre*, 506, a priory near Bothwell; *ptarmigan*, 541, a species of grouse that turns white in winter; *royal ward*, 577, Malcolm's parents were dead and he was not yet of age; *knight*, 592, Roderick.

XXVIII.-XXXVII.—The gravity of the situation now becomes apparent. The king has already crushed the turbulent Border chiefs, and his armed bands are gathering around the entrances to this part of the Highlands, as if to attack Rod-

erick. Roderick's plan is that Douglas shall give him his daughter and that, united in this way, the outlaw and the exile shall successfully rouse the surrounding territory to withstand the threatened attack. Douglas does not wish his daughter to marry against her will and wishes to avoid bloodshed. He therefore proposes to seek another refuge and advises Roderick to make peace with the king. *Glozing*, 606, glossing, smooth; *Border-side*, 616, the district near the English border; *your counsel*, 638, I beg your counsel in the strait which I explain; *battled*, 702, battlemented; *lackey*, 805, a verb.

CANTO III.

I.-XI.—Each canto covers the events of a day. This is, then, the day after Roderick's return. *Strath*, 87, valley; *fold*, 92, sheepfold; *cabala*, 142, the mediæval magic of the Jews; *Ben-Shie*, 168, the Scotch equivalent of the Banshee, the ghost-woman who warns a family of an approaching death; *strook*, 212, struck; *scathed*, 226, scorched.

XII.-XXIV.—The speeding of the cross is one of the famous passages in the poem. Scott says, in a note: "Inspection of the provincial map of Perthshire, or any large map of Scotland, will trace the progress of the signal through the small district of lakes and mountains, which, in exercise of my poetical privilege, I have subjected to the authority of my imaginary chieftain, and which, at the period of my romance, was really occupied by a clan who claimed a descent from Alpine—a clan the most unfortunate and most persecuted, but neither the least distinguished, least powerful, nor least brave of the tribes of the Gael. The first stage of the Fiery Cross is to Duncraggan, a place near the Brigg of Turk, where a short stream divides Loch Achray from Loch Vennachar. From thence, it passes toward Callander, and then, turning to the left up the pass of Leny, is consigned to Norman at the Chapel of Saint Bride, which stood on a small and romantic knoll in the middle of the valley, called Strath-Ire. Tombea and Arnandave, or Arduandave, are names of places in the vicinity. The alarm is then supposed to pass along the Lake of Lubnaig, and through the various glens in the district of Balquidder, including the neighbouring tracts of Glenfinlas

and Strath-Gartney." *Lanrick mead*, 286, on the north shore of Loch Vennachar ; *scaur*, 310, precipice ; *cheer*, 332, countenance ; *bosky*, 343, bushy ; *coronach*, 369, dirge ; *correi*, 386, a hillside hollow, here standing for the chase ; *tide*, 478, time ; *coif*, 485, cap ; *braes*, 569, slopes, on which the heath is sometimes set on fire to improve the pasturage ; *coil*, 577, turmoil.

XXV-XXXI. *Menteith*, 604, a district east of the lakes and north of Sterling ; *incumbent*, 633, lying or resting on ; *Ave Maria*, 713, hail, Mary !

CANTO IV.

I.-VIII.—*Wilding*, 5, wild ; *boune*, 36, prepared ; *bide, bout*, 42, endure, change of fortune ; *kerns*, 73, light-armed soldiers ; *boss*, 82, a knob on a shield ; *Targe*, 84, shield ; *broke*, 98, quartered ; *hold*, 102, hold his blade to be omen and aid ; *sentient*, 112, endowed with feeling ; *spy*, 140, the plot turns on this point, as will appear later ; *those*, 147, those who ; *glaiue*, 150, sword ; *pale*, 153, stake, an upright bar in a coat of arms ; *stance*, 174, station.

IX.-XIX.—The story now returns to Ellen and the hunter of the first canto. The latter reached the Lowlands again on the second day and bribed his guide, a henchman of Roderick's, to lead him back to Ellen's retreat. Notice the harper's dream about Ellen's fettering Malcolm, which is somehow regarded as a favorable omen. Douglas, seeing that he has put in peril both Roderick and Malcolm, has evidently determined to surrender himself to the king. *Trowed*, 223, trusted ; *Cambuskenneth*, 231, near Stirling ; *mavis and merle*, 262, thrush and blackbird ; *wold*, 267, open field ; *vest of pall*, 277, clothing of rich stuff ; *vair*, 285, squirrel fur ; *sheen*, 286, shining ; *won'd*, dwelt ; *kindly blood*, 330, blood of kin ; *wist*, 357, knew ; *bourne*, 387, brook ; *scathe*, 392, harm ; *art*, 415, artfulness ; *train*, 437, device ; *reck of*, 473, care for.

XX.-XXXI.—*Weeds*, 506, clothes ; *groom*, 564, Murdoch ; *batten*, 567, fatten ; *toils*, 590, nets ; *ten*, 594, ten branches on his horns ; *favour*, 686, a token of a lady's favour, worn by a knight ; *Coilantogle*, 787, near the eastern end of Loch Vennachar.

CANTO V.

The most brilliant and thrilling canto in the poem, and one which, now the reader is accustomed to Scott's style and has the plot clearly in mind, requires little comment.

I.-XI.—*Show*, 102, show yourself to be; *mewed*, 126, shut up; *good faith*, 177, in good faith; *jack*, 253, a heavy leather jacket.

XII.-XIX.—*Lines*, 301, entrenchments; *ruth*, 364, pity; *uncle*, 526, the Douglas of Scott's tale is a creation of his fancy. At the death of James IV., his successor, James V., was but an infant. The "banished Earl" had married the queen dowager and secured great political influence for himself and his family, and had kept James "mewed" in Stirling Castle. Escaping at the age of sixteen, the young king gathered his friends about him and banished the Douglas family. This is supposed to have happened some fifteen years before the date of the story.

XX.-XXXIII.—*A Douglas*, 550, one of his ancestors, William, the eighth earl, had been stabbed by his king, James II.; *pageant*, 561, a car on which a spectacle was represented or a play given; *morrice-dancers*, 562, merry-makers in costume, frequently representing Robin Hood and his band (see lines 614-618); *butts*, 613, targets; *wight*, 630, person or fellow: indifferent as to which archer fellow it was; *in whom a foe*, 742, in whom my womanish mercy would not see a foe; *cognisance*, 838, the sable pale before mentioned.

CANTO VI.

At the opening of the last canto the situation is at its worst. Roderick has been taken prisoner and his clan is in open rebellion; Douglas has surrendered himself and has not met with favour; Malcolm is in the power of the king and probably suspected of treason; and Ellen is friendless and unprotected save for the harper. Her sole resource is the king's signet ring, given her by the Lowland knight; upon this seems to rest the only chance of safety for her and those who are dear to her.

I.-XII.—*Caitiff*, 3, wretch; *buxom*, 106, lively; *black jack*.

110, large leather drinking cup ; *upsees*, 113, a slang expression, drink deeply ; *dues of his cure*, 121, the privileges of his office are petticoats and bowls, — flirtation and drinking ; *Needwood*, 170, a royal forest in England ; *our duties own*, 212, our duty is to recognise this ring ; *barret-cap*, 334, the military cap of cloth ; *garniture*, 290, furniture ; *leech*, 295, physician.

XIII.-XXII.—*Prore*, 306, prow ; *erne*, 377, the eagle ; *barded*, 404, covered with armour ; *battalia*, 405, line of battle ; *raward*, 414, vanward ; *Tinchel*, 452, a narrowing circle of hunters ; *refluent*, 483, poured back ; *bonnet-pieces*, 539, gold pieces on which the king's image bore a cap instead of a crown ; *store*, 539, stored with.

XXIII.-XXIX.—*Presence*, 726, presence chamber.

APPENDIX

I. SCOTT'S INTRODUCTION TO THE EDITION OF 1830.

AFTER the success of *Marmion*, I felt inclined to exclaim with Ulysses in the *Odyssey* :—

Οὗτος μὲν δὴ ἄεθλος ἀάατος ἐκτετέλεσται.

Νῦν αὖτε σκοπὸν ἄλλον.

Odys. xxii. 5.

“ One venturous game my hand has won to day—
Another, gallants, yet remains to play.”

The ancient manners, the habits and customs of the aboriginal race by whom the Highlands of Scotland were inhabited, had always appeared to me peculiarly adapted to poetry. The change in their manners, too, had taken place almost within my own time, or at least I had learned many particulars concerning the ancient state of the Highlands from the old men of the last generation. I had always thought the old Scottish Gael highly adapted for poetical composition. The feuds and political dissensions which, half a century earlier, would have rendered the richer and wealthier part of the kingdom indisposed to countenance a poem the scene of which was laid in the Highlands, were now sunk in the generous compassion which the English, more than any other nation, feel for the misfortunes of an honourable foe. The poems of Ossian had, by their popularity, sufficiently shown that if writings on Highland subjects were qualified to interest the reader, mere national prejudices were, in the present day, very unlikely to interfere with their success.

I had also read a great deal, seen much, and heard more, of that romantic country, where I was in the habit of spending some time every autumn : and the scenery of Loch Katrine was connected with the recollection of many a dear friend and merry expedition of former days. This poem, the action of which lay among scenes so beautiful, and so deeply imprinted on my recollections, was a labour of love, and it was no less so to recall the manners and incidents introduced. The frequent

custom of James IV., and particularly of James V., to walk through their kingdom in disguise, afforded me the hint of an incident which never fails to be interesting if managed with the slightest address or dexterity.

I may now confess, however, that the employment, though attended with great pleasure, was not without its doubts and anxieties. A lady to whom I was nearly related, and with whom I lived, during her whole life, on the most brotherly terms of affection, was residing with me at the time when the work was in progress, and used to ask me what I could possibly do to rise so early in the morning (that happening to be the most convenient to me for composition). At last I told her the subject of my meditations; and I can never forget the anxiety and affection expressed in her reply. "Do not be so rash," she said, "my dearest cousin. You are already popular,—more so, perhaps, than you yourself will believe, or than even I, or other partial friends, can fairly allow to your merit. You stand high,—do not rashly attempt to climb higher, and incur the risk of a fall; for, depend upon it, a favourite will not be permitted even to stumble with impunity." I replied to this affectionate expostulation in the words of Montrose,—

"He either fears his fate too much,
Or his deserts are small,
Who dares not put it to the touch
To gain or lose it all."

"If I fail," I said, for the dialogue is strong in my recollection, "it is a sign that I ought never to have succeeded, and I will write prose for life; you shall see no change in my temper, nor will I eat a single meal the worse. But if I succeed,—

'Up with the bonnie blue bonnet,
The dirk, and the feather, and a'!'"

Afterwards I showed my affectionate and anxious critic the first canto of the poem, which reconciled her to my imprudence. Nevertheless, though I answered thus confidently, with the obstinacy often said to be proper to those who bear my surname, I acknowledge that my confidence was considerably shaken by the warning of her excellent taste and unbiassed friendship. Nor was I much comforted by her retraction of the unfavourable judgment, when I recollected how likely a natural partiality was to effect that change of opinion. In

such cases, affection rises like a light on the canvas, improves any favourable tints which it formerly exhibited, and throws its defects into the shade.

I remember that about the same time a friend started in to "heeze up my hope," like the "sportsman with his cutty gun," in the old song. He was bred a farmer, but a man of powerful understanding, natural good taste, and warm poetical feeling, perfectly competent to supply the wants of an imperfect or irregular education. He was a passionate admirer of field-sports, which we often pursued together.

As this friend happened to dine with me at Ashestiel one day, I took the opportunity of reading to him the first canto of *The Lady of the Lake*, in order to ascertain the effect the poem was likely to produce upon a person who was but too favourable a representative of readers at large. It is of course to be supposed that I determined rather to guide my opinion by what my friend might appear to feel, than by what he might think fit to say. His reception of my recitation, or prelection, was rather singular. He placed his hand across his brow, and listened with great attention through the whole account of the stag-hunt, till the dogs threw themselves into the lake to follow their master, who embarks with Ellen Douglas. He then started up with a sudden exclamation, struck his hand on the table, and declared, in a voice of censure calculated for the occasion, that the dogs must have been totally ruined by being permitted to take the water after such a severe chase. I own I was much encouraged by the species of revery which had possessed so zealous a follower of the sports of the ancient Nimrod, who had been completely surprised out of all doubts of the reality of the tale. Another of his remarks gave me less pleasure. He detected the identity of the king with the wandering knight, Fitz-James, when he winds his bugle to summon his attendants. . . .

This discovery, as Mr. Pepys says of the rent in his camlet cloak, was but a trifle, yet it troubled me; and I was at a good deal of pains to efface any marks by which I thought my secret could be traced before the conclusion, when I relied on it with the same hope of producing effect with which the Irish post-boy is said to reserve a "trot for the avenue."

I took uncommon pains to verify the accuracy of the local circumstances of this story. I recollect, in particular, that to

ascertain whether I was telling a probable tale I went into Perthshire, to see whether King James could actually have ridden from the banks of Loch Vennachar to Stirling Castle within the time supposed in the poem, and had the pleasure to satisfy myself that it was quite practicable.

After a considerable delay, *The Lady of the Lake* appeared in June, 1810; and its success was certainly so extraordinary as to induce me for the moment to conclude that I had at last fixed a nail in the proverbially inconstant wheel of Fortune, whose stability in behalf of an individual who had so boldly courted her favours for three successive times had not as yet been shaken. I had attained, perhaps, that degree of reputation at which prudence, or certainly timidity, would have made a halt, and discontinued efforts by which I was far more likely to diminish my fame than to increase it. But, as the celebrated John Wilkes is said to have explained to his late Majesty, that he himself, amid his full tide of popularity, was never a Wilkite, so I can, with honest truth, exculpate myself from having been at any time a partisan of my own poetry, even when it was in the highest fashion with the million. It must not be supposed that I was either so ungrateful or so superabundantly candid as to despise or scorn the value of those whose voice had elevated me so much higher than my own opinion told me I deserved. I felt, on the contrary, the more grateful to the public, as receiving that from partiality to me which I could not have claimed from merit; and I endeavoured to deserve the partiality by continuing such exertions as I was capable of for their amusement.

It may be that I did not, in this continued course of scribbling, consult either the interest of the public or my own. But the former had effectual means of defending themselves, and could, by their coldness, sufficiently check any approach to intrusion; and for myself, I had now for several years dedicated my hours so much to literary labour that I should have felt difficulty in employing myself otherwise; and so, like Dogberry, I generously bestowed all my tediousness on the public, comforting myself with the reflection that, if posterity should think me undeserving of the favour with which I was regarded by my contemporaries, "they could not but say I *had* the crown," and had enjoyed for a time that popularity which is so much coveted.

I conceived, however, that I held the distinguished situation I had obtained, however unworthily, rather like the champion of pugilism, on the condition of being always ready to show proofs of my skill, than in the manner of the champion of chivalry, who performs his duties only on rare and solemn occasions. I was in any case conscious that I could not long hold a situation which the caprice, rather than the judgment, of the public had bestowed upon me, and preferred being deprived of my precedence by some more worthy rival, to sinking into contempt for my indolence, and losing my reputation by what Scottish lawyers call the *negative prescription*. Accordingly, those who choose to look at the Introduction to *Rokeby*, will be able to trace the steps by which I declined as a poet to figure as a novelist; as the ballad says, Queen Eleanor sunk at Charing Cross to rise again at Queenhithe.

It only remains for me to say that, during my short pre-eminence of popularity, I faithfully observed the rules of moderation which I had resolved to follow before I began my course as a man of letters. If a man is determined to make a noise in the world, he is sure to encounter abuse and ridicule, as he who gallops furiously through a village must reckon on being followed by the curs in full cry. Experienced persons know that in stretching to flog the latter, the rider is very apt to catch a bad fall; nor is an attempt to chastise a malignant critic attended with less danger to the author. On this principle, I let parody, burlesque, and squibs find their own level; and while the latter hissed most fiercely, I was cautious never to catch them up, as schoolboys do, to throw them back against the naughty boy who fired them off, wisely remembering that they are in such cases apt to explode in the handling. Let me add that my reign (since Byron has so called it) was marked by some instances of good-nature as well as patience. I never refused a literary person of merit such services in smoothing his way to the public as were in my power; and I had the advantage—rather an uncommon one with our irritable race—to enjoy general favour without incurring permanent ill-will, so far as is known to me, among any of my contemporaries.

ABBOTSFORD, April, 1830.

II. THE REIGN OF JAMES V.

From Scott's *Tales of a Grandfather*, Chapters xxvi.-xxviii.

[At the death of James IV. in the battle of Flodden Field, his wife, Queen Margaret, assumed the regency for her infant son, James V., and married Douglas, Earl of Angus. The nobles, however, called back from France John, Duke of Albany, the nearest male relative of the late king, as regent. Civil strife ensued, until the Duke of Albany gave up the struggle.]

QUEEN MARGARET, who hated her husband Angus, as I have told you, now combined with his enemy Arran, to call James V., her son (though then only twelve years old), to the management of the public affairs; but the Earl of Angus, returning at this crisis from France, speedily obtained a superiority in the Scottish councils, and became the head of those nobles who desired to maintain a friendly alliance with England rather than to continue that league with France which had so often involved Scotland in quarrels with their powerful neighbour.

Margaret might have maintained her authority, for she was personally much beloved; but it was the fate or the folly of that Queen to form rash marriages. Like her brother, Henry of England, who tired of his wives, Margaret seems to have been addicted to tire of her husbands; but she had not the power of cutting the heads from the spouses whom she desired to be rid of. Having obtained a divorce from Angus, she married a young man of little power and inferior rank, named Henry Stewart, a younger son of Lord Evandale. She lost her influence by that ill-advised measure. Angus, therefore, rose to the supreme authority in Scotland, obtained possession of the person of the King, transacted every thing in the name of James, but by his own authority, and became in all respects the Regent of Scotland, though without assuming the name.

The talents of the Earl of Angus were equal to the charge he had assumed, and as he reconciled himself to his old rival the Earl of Arran, his power seemed founded on a sure basis. He was able to accomplish a treaty of peace with England.

which was of great advantage to the kingdom. But, according to the fashion of the times, Angus was much too desirous to confer all the great offices, lands, and other advantages in the disposal of the crown, upon his own friends and adherents, to the exclusion of all the nobles and gentry who had either taken part against him in the late struggle for power, or were not decidedly his partisans. The course of justice also was shamefully perverted, by the partiality of Angus for his friends, kinsmen, and adherents.

An old historian says, "that there dared no man strive at law with a Douglas, or yet with the adherent of a Douglas; for if he did, he was sure to get the worst of his law-suit. And," he adds, "although Angus travelled through the country under the pretence of punishing thieves, robbers, and murderers, there were no malefactors so great as those which rode in his own company."

The King, who was now fourteen years old, became disgusted with the sort of restraint in which Angus detained him, and desirous to free himself from his tutelage. His mother had doubtless a natural influence over him, and that likewise was exerted to the Earl's prejudice. The Earl of Lennox, a wise and intelligent nobleman, near in blood to the King, was also active in fostering his displeasure against the Douglasses and schemes began to be agitated for taking the person of the King out of the hands of Angus. But Angus was so well established in the government that his authority could not be destroyed except by military force; and it was not easy to bring such to bear against one so powerful, and of such a martial character.

At length it seems to have been determined to employ the agency of Sir Walter Scott of Buccleuch, a man of great courage and military talent, head of a numerous and powerful clan, and possessed of much influence on the Border. He had been once the friend of Angus, and had even scaled the walls of Edinburgh with a great body of his clan, in order to render the party of the Earl uppermost in that city. But of late he had attached himself to Lennox, by whose counsel he seems to have been guided in the enterprise which I am about to give you an account of.

Some excesses had taken place on the Border, probably by the connivance of Buccleuch, which induced Angus to march

to Jedburgh, bringing the King in his company, lest ne should have made his escape during his absence. He was joined by the clans of Home and Ker, both in league with him, and he had, besides, a considerable body of chosen attendants. Angus was returning from this expedition, and had passed the night at Melrose. The Kers and Homes had taken leave of the Earl, who with the King and his retinue had left Melrose, when a band of a thousand horsemen suddenly appeared on the side of an eminence called Halidon-hill, and, descending into the valley, interposed between the Earl and the bridge, by which he must pass the Tweed on his return northward.

"Sir," said Angus to the King, "yonder comes Buccleuch, with the Border thieves of Teviotdale and Liddesdale, to interrupt your Grace's passage. I vow to God they shall either fight or fly. You shall halt upon this knoll with my brother George, while we drive off these banditti, and clear the road for your Grace."

The King made no answer, for in his heart he desired that Buccleuch's undertaking might be successful ; but he dared not say so.

Angus, meantime, despatched a herald to charge Buccleuch to withdraw with his forces. Scott replied, "that he was come, according to the custom of the Borders, to show the King his clan and followers, and invite his Grace to dine at his house." To which he added, "that he knew the King's mind as well as Angus." The Earl advanced, and the Borderers, shouting their war-cry of Bellenden, immediately joined battle, and fought stoutly ; but the Homes and Kers, who were at no great distance, returned on hearing the alarm and coming through the little village of Darnick, set upon Buccleuch's men and decided the fate of the day. The Borderers fled, but Buccleuch and his followers fought bravely in their retreat, and turning upon the Kers, slew several of them in particular, Ker of Cessford, a chief of the name, who was killed by the lance of one of the Elliots, a retainer of Buccleuch. His death occasioned a deadly feud between the clan of Scott and Ker, which lasted for a century, and cost much blood. This skirmish took place on the 25th of July, 1526. About eighty Scotts were slain on the field of battle, and sentence was pronounced against Buccleuch and many of his clan, as guilty of high treason. But after the King had shake-

off the yoke of the Douglasses, he went in person to Parliament to obtain the restoration of Buccleuch, who, he declared on his kingly word, had come to Melrose without any purpose of quarrel, but merely to pay his duty to his prince, and show him the number of his followers. In evidence of which the King affirmed that the said Wat was not clad in armour, but in a leathern coat (a buff-coat, I suppose), with a black bonnet on his head. The family were restored to their estates accordingly; but Sir Walter Scott was long afterwards murdered by the Kers, at Edinburgh, in revenge of the death of the Laird of Cessford.

The Earl of Lennox, being disappointed in procuring the King's release by means of Buccleuch, now resolved to attempt it in person. He received much encouragement from the Chancellor Beaton (distinguished at the skirmish called Cleanthe-Causeway), from the Earl of Glencairn, and other noblemen, who saw with displeasure the Earl of Angus confining the young King like a prisoner, and that all the administration of the kingdom centred in the Douglasses. Lennox assembled an army of ten or twelve thousand men, and advanced upon Edinburgh from Stirling. Angus and Arran, who were still closely leagued together, encountered Lennox, with an inferior force, near the village of Newliston. The rumor that a battle was about to commence soon reached Edinburgh, when Sir George Douglas hastened to call out the citizens in arms, to support his brother, the Earl of Angus. The city bells were rung, trumpets were sounded, and the King himself was obliged to mount on horseback, to give countenance to the measures of the Douglasses, whom in his soul he detested. James was so sensible of his situation that he tried, by every means in his power, to delay the march of the forces which were mustered at Edinburgh. When they reached the village of Corstorphine, they heard the thunder of the guns; which inflamed the fierce impatience of George Douglas to reach the field of battle, and also increased the delays of the young King, who was in hopes Angus might be defeated before his brother could come up. Douglas, perceiving this, addressed the King in language which James never forgot nor forgave:—"Your Grace need not think to escape us," said this fierce warrior; "if our enemies had hold of you on one side, and we on the other, we would tear you to pieces ere we would let you go."

Tidings now came from the field of battle that Lennox had been defeated, and that Angus had gained the victory. The young King, dismayed at the news, now urged his attendants to gallop forward, as much as he had formerly desired them to hang back. He charged them to prevent slaughter, and save lives, especially that of Lennox. Sir Andrew Wood, one of the King's cup-bearers, arrived in the field of battle time enough to save the Earl of Glencairn, who was still fighting gallantly by assistance of some strong ground, though he had scarce thirty men left alive; and Wood contrived to convey him safe out of the field. But Lennox, about whose safety the King was so anxious, was already no more. He had been slain, in cold blood, by that bloodthirsty man, Sir James Hamilton of Draphane, who took him from the Laird of Pardivan, to whom he had surrendered himself. This deed seemed to flow from the brutal nature of the perpetrator, who took such a pleasure in shedding blood that he slashed with his own hand the faces of many of the prisoners. Arran, the father of this ferocious man, bitterly lamented the fate of Lennox, who was his nephew. He was found mourning beside the body, over which he had spread his scarlet cloak. "The hardiest, stoutest, and wisest man that Scotland bore," he said, "lies here slain."

After these two victories, the Earl of Angus seemed to be so firmly established in power that his followers set no bounds to their presumption, and his enemies were obliged to fly and hide themselves. Chancellor Beaton, disguised as a shepherd, fed sheep on Bogrian-knowe, until he made his peace with the Earls of Angus and Arran, by great gifts, both in money and in church lands. Angus established around the King's person a guard of a hundred men of his own choice, commanded by Douglas of Parkhead; he made his brother George, whom James detested, Master of the Royal Household; and Archibald of Kilspindie, his uncle, Lord Treasurer of the Realm. But the close restraint in which the King found himself, only increased his eager desire to be rid of all the Douglasses together. Force having failed in two instances, James had recourse to stratagem.

He prevailed on his mother, Queen Margaret, to yield up to him the castle of Stirling, which was her jointure-house, and secretly to put it into the hands of a governor whom he could

trust. This was done with much caution. Thus prepared with a place of refuge, James watched with anxiety an opportunity of flying to it; and he conducted himself with such apparent confidence toward Angus that the Douglasses were lulled into security, and concluded that the King was reconciled to his state of bondage, and had despaired of making his escape.

James was then residing at Falkland, a royal palace conveniently situated for hunting and hawking, in which he seemed to take great pleasure. The Earl of Angus at this period left the court for Lothian, where he had some urgent business—Archibald Douglas of Kilspindie went to Dundee, to visit a lady to whom he was attached—and George Douglas had gone to St. Andrews, to extort some further advantages from Chancellor Beaton, who was now archbishop of that see, and primate of Scotland. There was thus none of the Douglasses left about the King's person, except Parkhead, with his guard of one hundred men, in whose vigilance the others confided.

The King thought the time favourable for his escape. To lay all suspicion asleep, he pretended he was to rise next morning at an early hour, for the purpose of hunting the stag. Douglas of Parkhead, suspecting nothing, retired to bed after placing his watch. But the King was no sooner in his private chamber, than he called a trusty page, named John Hart:—"Jockie," said he, "dost thou love me?"

"Better than myself," answered the domestic.

"And will you risk any thing for me?"

"My life, with pleasure," said John Hart.

The King then explained his purpose, and dressing himself in the attire of a groom, he went with Hart to the stable, as if for the purpose of getting the horses ready for the next day's hunt. The guards, deceived by their appearance, gave them no interruption. At the stables three good horses were saddled and in readiness, under charge of a yeoman, or groom, whom the King had entrusted with his design.

James mounted with his two servants, and galloped, during the whole night, as eager as a bird just escaped from a cage. At daylight he reached the bridge of Stirling, which was the only mode of passing the river Forth, except by boats. It was defended by gates, which the King, after passing through them, ordered to be closed, and directed the passage to be

watched. He was a weary man when he reached Stirling castle, where he was joyfully received by the governor, whom his mother had placed in that strong fortress. The draw-bridges were raised, the portcullises dropt, guards set, and every measure of defence and precaution resorted to. But the King was so much afraid of again falling into the hands of the Douglasses, that, tired as he was, he would not go to sleep until the keys of the castle were placed in his own keeping, and laid underneath his pillow.

In the morning there was great alarm at Falkland. Sir George Douglas had returned thither, on the night of the King's departure, about eleven o'clock. On his arrival, he inquired after the King, and was answered by the porter as well as the watchmen upon guard, that he was sleeping in his chamber, as he intended to hunt early in the morning. Sir George therefore retired to rest in full security. But the next morning he learned different tidings. One Peter Carmichael, bailie of Abernethy, knocked at the door of his chamber, and asked him if he knew "what the King was doing that morning?"

"He is in his chamber asleep," said Sir George.

"You are mistaken," answered Carmichael; "he passed the bridge of Stirling this last night."

On hearing this, Douglas started up in haste, went to the King's chamber, and knocked for admittance. When no answer was returned, he caused the door to be forced, and when he found the apartment empty, he cried, "Treason!—The King is gone, and none knows whither." Then he sent post to his brother, the Earl of Angus, and despatched messengers in every direction, to seek the King, and to assemble the Douglasses.

When the truth became known, the adherents of Angus rode in a body to Stirling; but the King was so far from desiring to receive them, that he threatened, by sound of trumpet, to declare any of the name of Douglas a traitor who should approach within twelve miles of his person, or who should presume to meddle with the administration of government. Some of the Douglasses inclined to resist this proclamation; but the Earl of Angus and his brother resolved to obey it, and withdrew to Linlithgow.

Soon afterwards, the King assembled around him the nu-

merous nobility, who envied the power of Angus and Arran, or had suffered injuries at their hands; and, in open parliament, accused them of treason, declaring, that he had never been sure of his life all the while that he was in their power. A sentence of forfeiture was, therefore, passed against the Earl of Angus, and he was driven into exile, with all his friends and kinsmen. And thus the Red Douglasses, of the house of Angus, shared almost the same fate with the Black Douglasses, of the elder branch of that mighty house; with this difference, that as they had never risen so high, so they did not fall so irretrievably; for the Earl of Angus lived to return and enjoy his estates in Scotland, where he again played a distinguished part. But this was not till after the death of James V., who retained, during his whole life, an implacable resentment against the Douglasses, and never permitted one of the name to settle in Scotland while he lived.

James persevered in this resolution even under circumstances which rendered his unrelenting resentment ungenerous. Archibald Douglas of Kilspindie, the Earl of Angus's uncle, had been a personal favourite of the King before the disgrace of his family. He was so much recommended to James by his great strength, manly appearance, and skill in every kind of warlike exercise, that he was wont to call him his Graysteil, after the name of a champion in a romance then popular. Archibald, becoming rather an old man, and tired of his exile in England, resolved to try the King's mercy. He thought that as they had been so well acquainted formerly, and as he had never offended James personally, he might find favour from their old intimacy. He therefore threw himself in the King's way one day as he returned from hunting in the park at Stirling. It was several years since James had seen him, but he knew him at a great distance, by his firm and stately step, and said, "Yonder is my Graysteil, Archibald of Kilspindie." But when they met, he showed no appearance of recognizing his old servant. Douglas turned, and still hoping to obtain a glance of favourable recollection, ran along by the King's side; and although James trotted his horse hard against the hill, and Douglas wore a heavy shirt of mail under his clothes, for fear of assassination, yet Graysteil was at the castle gate as soon as the King. James passed him, and entered the castle; but Douglas, exhausted with exertion, sat down at the

gate and asked for a cup of wine. The hatred of the King against the name of Douglas was so well known, that no domestic about the court dared procure for the old warrior even this trifling refreshment. The King blamed, indeed, his servants for their discourtesy, and even said, that but for his oath never to employ a Douglas, he would have received Archibald of Kilspindie into his service, as he had formerly known him a man of great ability. Yet he sent his commands to his poor Graysteil to retire to France, where he died heart-broken soon afterwards. Even Henry VIII. of England, himself of an unforgiving temper, blamed the implacability of James on this occasion, and quoted an old proverb,—

“ A King’s face
Should give grace.”

Freed from the stern control of the Douglas family, James V. now began to exercise the government in person, and displayed most of the qualities of a wise and good prince. He was handsome in his person, and resembled his father in the fondness for military exercises, and the spirit of chivalrous honour which James IV. loved to display. He also inherited his father’s love of justice, and his desire to establish and enforce wise and equal laws, which should protect the weak against the oppression of the great. It was easy enough to make laws, but to put them in vigorous exercise was of much greater difficulty ; and in his attempt to accomplish this laudable purpose, James often incurred the ill-will of the more powerful nobles. He was a well-educated and accomplished man ; and like his ancestor, James I., was a poet and a musician. He had, however, his defects. He avoided his father’s failing of profusion, having no hoarded treasures to employ on pomp and show ; but he rather fell into the opposite fault, being of a temper too parsimonious ; and though he loved state and display, he endeavoured to gratify that taste as economically as possible, so that he has been censured as rather close and covetous. He was also, though the foibles seem inconsistent, fond of pleasure, and disposed to too much indulgence. It must be added, that when provoked, he was unrelenting even to cruelty ; for which he had some apology, considering the ferocity of the subjects over whom he reigned. But, on the whole, James V. was an amiable man, and a good sovereign.

His first care was to bring the Borders of Scotland to some degree of order. These, as you were formerly told, were inhabited by tribes of men, forming each a different clan, as they were called, and obeying no orders, save those which were given by their chiefs. These chiefs were supposed to represent the first founder of the name, or family. The attachment of the clansmen to the chief was very great ; indeed, they paid respect to no one else. In this the Borderers agreed with the Highlanders, as also in their love of plunder, and neglect of the general laws of the country. But the Border men wore no tartan dress, and served almost always on horseback, whereas the Highlanders acted always on foot. You will also remember that the Borderers spoke the Scottish language, and not the Gaelic tongue used by the mountaineers.

The situation of these clans on the frontiers exposed them to constant war ; so that they thought of nothing else but of collecting bands of their followers together, and making incursions, without much distinction, on the English, on the Lowland (or inland) Scots, or upon each other. They paid little respect either to times of truce or treaties of peace, but exercised their depredations without regard to either, and often occasioned wars betwixt England and Scotland which would not otherwise have taken place.

It is said of a considerable family on the Borders, that when they had consumed all the cattle about the castle, a pair of spurs was placed on the table in a covered dish, as a hint that they must ride out and fetch more. The chiefs and leading men told down their daughters' portions according to the plunder which they were able to collect in the course of a Michaelmas moon, when its prolonged light allowed them opportunity for their free-booting excursions. They were very brave in battle, but in time of peace they were a pest to their Scottish neighbours. As their insolence had risen to a high pitch after the field of Flodden had thrown the country into confusion, James V. resolved to take very severe measures against them.

His first step was to secure the persons of the principal chieftains by whom these disorders were privately encouraged. The Earl of Bothwell, the Lord Home, Lord Maxwell, Scott of Buccleuch, Ker of Fairniehirst, and other powerful chiefs

who might have opposed the King's purposes, were seized, and imprisoned in separate fortresses in the inland country.

James then assembled an army, in which warlike purposes were united with those of silvan sport ; for he ordered all the gentlemen in the wild districts which he intended to visit, to bring in their best dogs, as if his only purpose had been to hunt the deer in those desolate regions. This was intended to prevent the Borderers from taking the alarm, in which case they would have retreated into their mountains and fastnesses, from whence it would have been difficult to dislodge them.

These men had indeed no distinct idea of the offences which they had committed, and consequently no apprehension of the King's displeasure against them. The laws had been so long silent in that remote and disorderly country, that the outrages which were practised by the strong against the weak seemed to the perpetrators the natural course of society, and to present nothing that was worthy of punishment.

Thus, as the King, in the beginning of his expedition, suddenly approached the castle of Piers Cockburn of Henderland, that baron was in the act of providing a great entertainment to welcome him, when James caused him to be suddenly seized on, and executed. Adam Scott of Tushielaw, called the King of the Border, met the same fate. But an event of greater importance was the fate of John Armstrong, of Gilnockie, near Langholm.

This freebooting chief had risen to great consequence, and the whole neighbouring district of England paid him *black mail*, that is, a sort of tribute, in consideration of which he forbore plundering them. He had a high idea of his own importance, and seems to have been unconscious of having merited any severe usage at the King's hands. On the contrary, he came to meet his sovereign at a place about ten miles from Hawick, called Carlinrigg chapel, richly dressed, and having with him twenty-four gentlemen, his constant retinue, as well attired as himself. The King, incensed to see a freebooter so gallantly equipped, commanded him instantly to be led to execution, saying, "What wants this knave, save a crown, to be as magnificent as a king?" John Armstrong made great offers for his life, offering to maintain himself, with forty men, ready to serve the King at a moment's notice, at his own expense ; engaging never to hurt or injure

any Scottish subject, as indeed had never been his practice ; and undertaking, that there was not a man in England, of whatever degree, duke, earl, lord, or baron, but he would engage, within a short time, to present him to the King, dead or alive. But when the King would listen to none of his offers, the robber chief said, very proudly, "I am but a fool to ask grace at a graceless face ; but had I guessed you would have used me thus, I would have kept the Border-side, in despite of the King of England and you both ; for I well know that King Henry would give the weight of my best horse in gold to know that I am sentenced to die this day."

John Armstrong was led to execution, with all his men, and hanged without mercy. The people of the inland counties were glad to be rid of him ; but on the Borders he was both missed and mourned, as a brave warrior, and a stout man-at-arms against England.

Such were the effects of the terror struck by these general executions, that James was said to have made "the rush bush keep the cow ;" that is to say, that even in this lawless part of the country, men dared no longer make free with property, and cattle might remain on their pastures unwatched. James was also enabled to draw profit from the lands which the crown possessed near the Borders, and is said to have had ten thousand sheep at one time grazing in Ettrick forest, under the keeping of one Andrew Bell, who gave the King as good an account of the profits of the flock as if they had been grazing in the bounds of Fife, then the most civilized part of Scotland.

On the other hand, the Borders of Scotland were greatly weakened by the destruction of so many brave men, who, notwithstanding their lawless course of life, were true defenders of their country ; and there is reason to censure the extent to which James carried his severity, as being to a certain degree impolitic, and beyond doubt cruel and excessive.

In the like manner James proceeded against the Highland chiefs ; and by executions, forfeitures, and other severe measures, he brought the Northern mountaineers, as he had already done those of the South, into comparative subjection. He then set at liberty the Border chiefs, and others whom he had imprisoned, lest they should have offered any hindrance to the course of his justice.

As these fiery chieftains, after this severe chastisement, could no longer as formerly attack each other's castles and lands, they were forced to vent their deadly animosities in duels, which were frequently fought in the King's presence, his royal permission being first obtained. Thus, Douglas of Drumlanrig and Charteris of Amisfield did battle together in presence of the King, each having accused the other of high treason. They fought on foot with huge two-handed swords. Drumlanrig was somewhat blind, or short-sighted, and being in great fury, struck about him without seeing where he hit, and the Laird of Amisfield was not more successful, for his sword broke in the encounter: upon this, the King caused the battle to cease, and the combatants were with difficulty separated. Thus the King gratified these unruly barons, by permitting them to fight in his own presence, in order to induce them to remain at peace elsewhere.

James V., like his father James IV., had a custom of going about the country disguised as a private person, in order that he might hear complaints which might not otherwise reach his ears, and, perhaps, that he might enjoy amusements which he could not have partaken of in his avowed royal character. This is also said to have been a custom of James IV., his father, and several adventures are related of what befell them on such occasions. One or two of these narratives may help to enliven our story.

When James V. travelled in disguise, he used a name which was known only to some of his principal nobility and attendants. He was called the Goodman (the tenant, that is) of Ballengiech. Ballengiech is a steep pass which leads down behind the castle of Stirling. Once upon a time, when the court was feasting in Stirling, the King sent for some venison from the neighbouring hills. The deer were killed, and put on horses' backs to be transported to Stirling. Unluckily they had to pass the castle gates of Arnpryor, belonging to a chief of the Buchanans, who chanced to have a considerable number of guests with him. It was late, and the company were rather short of victuals, though they had more than enough of liquor. The chief, seeing so much fat venison passing his very door, seized on it; and to the expostulations of the keepers, who told him it belonged to King James, he answered insolently, that if James was King in

Scotland, he, Buchanan, was King in Kippen ; being the name of the district in which the castle of Arnpryor lay. On hearing what had happened, the King got on horseback, and rode instantly from Stirling to Buchanan's house, where he found a strong fierce-looking Highlander, with an axe on his shoulder, standing sentinel at the door. This grim warder refused the King admittance, saying, that the laird of Arnpryor was at dinner, and would not be disturbed. "Yet go up to the company, my good friend," said the King, "and tell him that the Goodman of Ballengiech is come to feast with the King of Kippen." The porter went grumbling into the house, and told his master that there was a fellow with a red beard at the gate, who called himself the Goodman of Ballengiech, who said he was come to dine with the King of Kippen. As soon as Buchanan heard these words, he knew that the King was come in person, and hastened down to kneel at James's feet, and to ask forgiveness for his insolent behaviour. But the King, who only meant to give him a fright, forgave him freely, and, going into the castle, feasted on his own venison which Buchanan had intercepted. Buchanan of Arnpryor was ever afterwards called the King of Kippen.

Upon another occasion, King James, being alone and in disguise, fell into a quarrel with some gypsies, or other vagrants, and was assaulted by four or five of them. This chanced to be very near the bridge of Cramond ; so the King got on the bridge, which, as it was high and narrow, enabled him to defend himself with his sword against the number of persons by whom he was attacked. There was a poor man thrashing corn in a barn near by, who came out on hearing the noise of the scuffle, and seeing one man defending himself against numbers, gallantly took the King's part with his flail, to such good purpose, that the gypsies were obliged to fly. The husbandman then took the King into the barn, brought him a towel and water to wash the blood from his face and hands, and finally walked with him a little way towards Edinburgh, in case he should be again attacked. On the way, the King asked his companion what and who he was. The labourer answered, that his name was John Howieson, and that he was a bondsman on the farm of Braehead, near Cramond, which belonged to the King of Scotland. James then asked the poor man, if there was any wish in the world

which he would particularly desire should be gratified ; and honest John confessed, he should think himself the happiest man in Scotland were he but proprietor of the farm on which he wrought as a labourer. He then asked the King, in turn, who *he* was ; and James replied, as usual, that he was the Goodman of Ballengiech, a poor man who had a small appointment about the palace ; but he added, that if John Howieson would come to see him on the next Sunday, he would endeavour to repay his manful assistance, and, at least, give him the pleasure of seeing the royal apartments.

John put on his best clothes, as you may suppose, and appearing at a postern gate of the palace, enquired for the Goodman of Ballengiech. The King had given orders that he should be admitted ; and John found his friend, the goodman, in the same disguise which he had formerly worn. The King, still preserving the character of an inferior officer of the household, conducted John Howieson from one apartment of the palace to another, and was amused with his wonder and his remarks. At length, James asked his visitor if he should like to see the King ; to which John replied, nothing would delight him so much, if he could do so without giving offence. The Goodman of Ballengiech, of course, undertook that the King would not be angry. "But," said John, "how am I to know his Grace from the nobles who will be all about him?"—"Easily," replied his companion ; "all the others will be uncovered—the King alone will wear his hat or bonnet."

So speaking, King James introduced the countryman into a great hall, which was filled by the nobility and officers of the crown. John was a little frightened, and drew close to his attendant ; but was still unable to distinguish the King. "I told you that you should know him by his wearing his hat," said the conductor. "Then," said John, after he had again looked round the room, "it must be either you or me, for all but us two are bare-headed."

The King laughed at John's fancy ; and that the good yeoman might have occasion for mirth also, he made him a present of the farm of Braehead, which he had wished so much to possess, on condition that John Howieson, or his successors, should be ready to present a ewer and basin for the King to wash his hands, when his Majesty should come to Holyrood

palace, or should pass the bridge of Cramond. Accordingly, in the year 1822, when George IV. came to Scotland, the descendant of John Howieson of Braehead, who still possesses the estate which was given to his ancestor, appeared at a solemn festival, and offered his Majesty water from a silver ewer, that he might perform the service by which he held his lands.

James V. was very fond of hunting, and, when he pursued that amusement in the Highlands, he used to wear the peculiar dress of that country, having a long and wide Highland shirt, and a jacket of tartan velvet, with plaid hose, and every thing else corresponding. The accounts for these are in the books of his chamberlain, still preserved.

On one occasion, when the King had an ambassador of the Pope along with him, with various foreigners of distinction, they were splendidly entertained by the Earl of Athole in a huge and singular rustic palace. It was built of timber, in the midst of a great meadow, and surrounded by moats, or fosses, full of the most delicate fish. It was enclosed and defended by towers, as if it had been a regular castle, and had within it many apartments, which were decked with flowers and branches, so that in treading them one seemed to be in a garden. Here were all kinds of game, and other provisions in abundance, with many cooks to make them ready, and plenty of the most costly spices and wines. The Italian ambassador was greatly surprised to see, amongst rocks and wildernesses, which seemed to be the very extremity of the world, such good lodging and so magnificent an entertainment. But what surprised him most of all, was to see the Highlanders set fire to the wooden castle as soon as the hunting was over, and the King in the act of departing. "Such is the constant practice of our Highlanders," said James to the ambassador; "however well they may be lodged over night, they always burn their lodging before they leave it." By this the King intimated the predatory and lawless habits displayed by these mountaineers.

The reign of James V. was not alone distinguished by his personal adventures and pastimes, but is honourably remembered on account of wise laws made for the government of his people, and for restraining the crimes and violence which were frequently practised among them; especially those of assassination, burning of houses, and driving of cattle, the usual

and ready means by which powerful chiefs avenged themselves of their feudal enemies.

For the decision of civil questions, James V. invented and instituted what is called the College of Justice, being the Supreme Court of Scotland in civil affairs. It consisted of fourteen judges (half clergy, half laity), and a president, who heard and decided causes. A certain number of learned men, trained to understand the laws, were appointed to the task of pleading the causes of such as had law-suits before these judges, who constituted what is popularly termed the Court of Session. These men were called advocates; and this was the first establishment of a body, regularly educated to the law, which has ever since been regarded in Scotland as an honourable profession, and has produced many great men.

James V. used great diligence in improving his navy, and undertook what was, at the time, rather a perilous task, to sail in person round Scotland, and cause an accurate survey to be made of the various coasts, bays, and islands, harbours, and roadsteads of his kingdom, many of which had been unknown to his predecessors, even by name.

This active and patriotic Prince ordered the mineral wealth of Scotland to be also enquired into. He obtained miners from Germany, who extracted both silver and gold from the mines of Leadhills, in the upper part of Clydesdale. The gold was of fine quality, and found in quantity sufficient to supply metal for a very elegant gold coin, which, bearing on one side the head of James V. wearing a bonnet, has been thence called the Bonnet-piece. It is said, that upon one occasion the King invited the ambassadors of Spain, France, and other foreign countries, to hunt with him in Crawford Moor, the district in which lie the mines I have just mentioned. They dined in the castle of Crawford, a rude old fortress. The King made some apology for the dinner, which was composed of the game they had killed during the hunting and hawking of the day, but he assured his guests that the dessert would make them some amends, as he had given directions that it should consist of the finest fruits which the country afforded. The foreigners looked at each other in surprise, on hearing the King talk of fruits being produced amidst the black moors and barren mountains around them. But the dessert made its appearance in the shape of a number of covered saucers, one of which

was placed before each guest, and being examined was found full of gold bonnet-pieces, which they were desired to accept as the fruit produced by the mountains of Crawford Moor. This new sort of dessert was no doubt as acceptable as the most delicate fruits of a southern climate. The mines of the country are now wrought only for lead, of which they produce still a very large quantity.

Although, as we have mentioned, James was a good economist, he did not neglect the cultivation of the fine arts. He rebuilt the palace of Linlithgow, which is on a most magnificent plan, and made additions to that of Stirling. He encouraged several excellent poets and learned men, and his usual course of life appears to have been joyous and happy. He was himself a poet of some skill, and he permitted great freedom to the rhymers of his time, in addressing verses to him, some of which conveyed severe censures of his government, and other satires on his foibles.

James also encouraged the sciences, but was deceived by a foreigner, who pretended to have knowledge of the art of making gold. This person, however, who was either crack-brained or an impostor, destroyed his own credit by the fabrication of a pair of wings, with which he proposed to fly from the top of Stirling castle. He actually made the attempt, but as his pinions would not work easily, he fell down the precipice, and broke his thigh-bone.

As the kingdom of Scotland, except during a very short and indecisive war with England, remained at peace till near the end of James's reign, and as that monarch was a wise and active prince, it might have been hoped that he at least would have escaped the misfortunes which seemed to haunt the name of Stewart. But a great change, which took place at this period, led James V. into a predicament, as unhappy as attended any of his ancestors.

[There follows an account of the Protestant Reformation and the resulting war between James and his uncle, Henry VIII. of England.]

A fierce and ruinous war immediately commenced. Henry sent numerous forces to ravage the Scottish Border. James obtained success in the first considerable action, to his unutterable great satisfaction, and prepared for more decisive hostility. He assembled the array of his kingdom, and marched

from Edinburgh as far as Fala, on his way to the Border, when tidings arrived, 1st November, 1542, that the English general had withdrawn his forces within the English frontier. On this news, the Scottish nobles, who, with their vassals, had joined the royal standard, intimated to their sovereign, that though they had taken up arms to save the country from invasion, yet they considered the war with England as an impolitic measure, and only undertaken to gratify the clergy; and that, therefore, the English having retired, they were determined not to advance one foot into the enemy's country. One Border chieftain alone offered with his retinue to follow the King wherever he chose to lead. This was John Scott of Thirlstane, whom James rewarded with an addition to his paternal coat-of-arms, with a bunch of spears for the crest, and the motto, "*Ready, aye Ready.*"

James, finding himself thus generally thwarted and deserted by the nobility, returned to Edinburgh, dishonoured before his people, and in the deepest dejection of mind.

To retaliate the inroads of the English, and wipe out the memory of Fala Moss, the King resolved that an army of ten thousand men should invade England on the Western Border; and he imprudently sent with them his peculiar favourite, Oliver Sinclair, who shared with the priests the unpopularity of the English war, and was highly obnoxious to the nobility, as one of those who engrossed the royal favour to their prejudice.

The army had just entered English ground, at a place called Solway Moss, when this Oliver Sinclair was raised upon the soldiers' shields to read to the army a commission, which, it was afterwards said, named Lord Maxwell commander of the expedition. But no one doubted at the time that Oliver Sinclair had himself been proclaimed commander-in-chief; and as he was generally disliked and despised, the army instantly fell into a state of extreme confusion. Four or five hundred English Borderers, commanded by Thomas Dacre and John Musgrave, perceived this fluctuation, and charged the numerous squadrons of the invading army. The Scots fled without even attempting to fight. Numbers of noblemen and persons of note suffered themselves to be made prisoners rather than face the displeasure of their disappointed sovereign.

The unfortunate James had lately been assailed by various

calamities. The death of his two sons, and the disgrace of the defection at Falkland, had made a deep impression on his mind, and haunted him even in the visions of the night. He dreamed he saw the fierce Sir James Hamilton, whom he had caused to be put to death upon slight evidence. The bloody shade approached him with a sword, and said, "Cruel tyrant, thou hast unjustly murdered me, who was indeed barbarous to other men, but always faithful and true to thee; wherefore now shalt thou have thy deserved punishment." So saying, it seemed to him as if Sir James Hamilton cut off first one arm and then another, and then left him, threatening to come back soon and cut his head off. Such a dream was very likely to arise in the King's mind, perturbed as it was by misfortunes, and even perhaps internally reproaching himself for Sir James Hamilton's death. But to James the striking off his arms appeared to allude to the death of his two sons, and he became convinced that the ultimate threats of the vision presaged his own death.

The disgraceful news of the battle, or rather the rout of Solway, filled up the measure of the King's despair and desolation. He shut himself up in the palace of Falkland, and refused to listen to any consolation. A burning fever, the consequence of his grief and shame, seized on the unfortunate monarch. They brought him tidings that his wife had given birth to a daughter; but he only replied, "Is it so?" reflecting on the alliance which had placed the Stewart family on the throne; "then God's will be done. It came with a lass, and it will go with a lass." With these words, presaging the extinction of his house, he made a signal of adieu to his courtiers, spoke little more, but turned his face to the wall, and died of the most melancholy of all diseases, a broken heart. He was scarcely thirty-one years old; in the very prime, therefore, of life.

